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*WASHINGTON WALTZ*





*HELEN LOMBARD*  
WASHINGTON  
WALTZ

DIPLOMATIC PEOPLE  
AND POLICIES



NEW YORK · ALFRED · A · KNOPF

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FIRST EDITION

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TO  
MY MOTHER

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# *WASHINGTON WALTZ*





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I

## THE LION AT BAY

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IN THE days of Warren Gamaliel Harding and Calvin Coolidge, the permanent officials of the British Foreign Office rated the Capital of the United States with that of the Netherlands East Indies. British diplomats stationed in Java get a special allowance called the "hill allowance" which covers a yearly escape from the hot lowlands of Batavia to the cool hills of Bandoeng. Until 1930, British diplomats stationed in Washington also drew "hill allowances" which enabled them to take long summer vacations in Bar Harbor or on the North Shore of Massachusetts.

In those days, the British Government considered Washington a Capital in name rather than in fact. New York was the heart of America—Washington was an administrative adjunct of New York, an outpost in which one could not be expected to exist between June and October.

Even today the newly-arrived European is startled to find that the Capital of the United States is more like a pleasant provincial town than the nerve-center of a big country. The smoke of industry never clouds the skyline. There are no factories. There is none of the bustle of Big Business. There is only one theatre and no night life to speak of. The friendless stranger in Washington finds it a very dull place in the evenings. The great, the near-great, the "rank" entertain each other in private homes. Social life goes on behind drawn curtains; it is not spread out in glittering restaurants and night clubs. It's a dull town for the pleasure-bent cosmopolitan. Twenty years ago many diplomats considered it a quiet village in which to rest between trips to New York.

America's entrance into the First World War, followed by the Washington Naval Conference and the spectacular Ramsay MacDonald visit to the American Capital, made Downing Street more Washington-conscious. Britain's returning naval officers, statesmen and parliamentarians made vigorous protests about the dinginess of Britain's Embassy on a traffic-engulfed corner of Connecticut Avenue.

The House of Commons was told by no less an authority than Sir Joshua Wedgwood that the Washington Embassy was a disgrace to British prestige. When the Commons were informed that a patriotic English-American real estate operator, Harry Wardman, had offered free-of-charge a large tract of ground in a hilly, undeveloped section of Massachusetts Avenue, as a site for a new Embassy, the Commons appropriated the necessary millions. The British Empire acquired an imposing new

home, and Harry Wardman developed the rest of the section into fashionable "Embassy Row."

When the last acre of the new Embassy's gardens had been sodded and rolled, Downing Street issued a momentous decree. The Capital of the United States, London ordained, was now in a "temperate climate," and the "hill allowances" of the attachés were henceforth discontinued.

Having settled the Washington climate and having acquired an appropriate stage for the diplomatic gestures of England's representatives, the Foreign Office pigeon-holed Washington among its liquidated questions and proceeded to doze once more while Germany launched a diplomatic blitzkrieg in the Capital of the U. S. A.

In addition to its government buildings and bad food Washington also is famous for its taxi-drivers. They are an exceptional crew, one of the unique features of the Capital. There are government clerks, Polish counts, newspapermen out of jobs, Foreign Service students, a former Congressman and a Marine sergeant, who used to be President Wilson's bodyguard at the Crillon Hotel. The Washington cab driver is a Gallup Poll all in himself. He takes Senators, Congressmen and diplomats hither and yon and talks to them all. He has opinions about everything and nonchalantly will discuss world problems, analyze baseball and politics, and make himself generally sociable while puffing a cigarette or a big black cigar. The taxi-men take a great deal of pride in Washington's buildings, its embassies and legations. It didn't take them long to find a name for England's impos-



ing new Embassy. They dubbed it "The Maternity Home."

That would-be Georgian structure combining in the same building the living quarters of the Ambassador and the offices of his staff, does look more like an institution than a residence.

The two-winged pile of red brick climbs up a whole city block of Massachusetts Avenue Hill. The asphalt driveway, the portico and the massive doors, opening into a bare entrance-hall, further confirm the institutional impression. It is not until you have gone up a curving marble stairway and down a black and white floored hall, flanked by black columns, that you begin to realize that you are in a residence. The drawing-room with its two fireplaces, crystal fixtures springing from the black mirrors that panel the walls, chintz-covered sofas, lamps and bowls of flowers becomes a room in a wealthy English country house. From the drawing-room, there is easy access, through a side entrance, to six acres of beautifully terraced gardens.

It was into this new Embassy that Sir Ronald and Lady Lindsay moved in 1930, to remain until Munich shook even the British Foreign Office. In the happy Edwardian period no more suitable couple could have been chosen to represent the Empire. The great, bulky, six-foot-four Britisher had charm and distinction. He possessed that quality which has been the greatest asset of the British in social America—the ability to make Americans feel like country cousins.

American-born Lady Lindsay, a New Yorker, was a short, rather stout woman who carried herself beauti-

fully and who looked as if she had come into the world with a diamond chain around her neck. Elizabeth Hoyt Lindsay had a gentle humor, a love of beautiful gardens, a genuine flair for landscape designing and a slightly ironical detachment from this troubled world.

Sir Ronald was a Scotsman, and once a year he would bare his knees and don the colors of his clan for the diplomatic reception at the White House. I remember him at the reception of 1938—just after Munich. The huge Britisher, in his bright red jacket and kilts, towered colorfully above his colleagues, vivid as some of them were.

The Hungarian wore the medieval costume of the magnates—the high-necked black tunic, white aigretted hat and spurred boots. The Dane's red coat and white cashmere trousers; the gold-logged jackets of the French and Italian envoys, their white-plumed Admirals' hats, looked more comic-opera than real. The ambassadors carried dainty symbolic swords, and were flanked by their uniformed military and naval attachés, reminders that force stood behind diplomacy, that the sword was ready to uphold the pen. At this full-dress reception, the male quite outshone the female—the expensive evening gowns of the women paled into insignificance beside the splendor of their escorts. And the huge British Ambassador was the most gorgeous of them all. He looked the very personification of the might of Empire as he majestically made his way through the crowded reception rooms of the White House.

Because he rarely remembered the names or even the faces of more than a few of his colleagues, the British envoy had the reputation of being "snooty." The truth is

that His Britannic Majesty's imposing Ambassador was as shy as a mid-Victorian girl. Crowds distressed him. He preferred the solitude of long walks or a tennis game with some member of his staff, to the round of Washington receptions. Quiet meals in the small dining room of the Embassy were more to his taste than the state dinners of the Diplomatic Corps. Sir Ronald was dismayed when his length of service in Washington compelled him to become Dean of the Corps—an honor which many Excellencies have coveted. For a shy man, the advantages of being Dean are few. It entitles him to the conspicuous No. 1 diplomatic license tag. It places him at the head of the long line of envoys and their staffs at official functions, and it obliges him to wine and dine once each season with every other foreign envoy in Washington.

Lindsay was shy even in tête-à-tête conversations and he rarely knew how to end an interview. If a guest arose during one of the frequent intervals of silence, he would suddenly revive the dialogue with a hurried: "Don't go, don't go!" and then sink again into reverie. Talking to Sir Ronald was like firing tennis balls into a pile of raw cotton. At his own parties, he was a delightful host, however, and could reveal an unexpected sense of humor and a wide culture, which he generally seemed to feel it his duty to conceal.

When the Lindsays came to Washington in 1930, British diplomacy was still firmly convinced that the only diplomatic weapon it needed was the prestige of the Empire crest. At that time a square white pasteboard embossed with the Lion and the Unicorn was the greatest prize any dowager could find on her breakfast tray.

Stately dinner parties, combining the "right people" from local and out-of-town society, with a sprinkling of government and diplomatic officials was all that any conscientious British envoy was expected to do in the matter of entertaining.

How could the Lindsays suspect that many a wealthy woman, who, with smug satisfaction opened an invitation to the British Embassy in 1930 would be in the America First movement in 1941?

It was not until 1939 that the British Foreign Office began to realize that Newport, Bar Harbor and Wall Street were no longer running the United States, and that some of the "right people" were no longer pro-British. How could the Lindsays know that many fashionable Anglophiles would cool toward England when it became apparent that country estates would be turned into vegetable gardens and that presentations at Court would be discontinued?

Serene in his confidence in the eternal prestige of the Empire crest, Lindsay followed the traditional British diplomatic technique.

State dinners, an occasional young people's dance, a musicale or so, the yearly garden party in honor of His Majesty's birthday, made a slow tempo of graceful, easy exchange of courtesies between Their Majesties' Representatives and the "right people" in America. Hoover's Undersecretary of State, William Castle, was a frequent tennis partner of Sir Ronald's. Alice Longworth was a favorite dinner guest. Both are now active members of the America First Committee. No envoy, of course, can expect to buy eternal allegiance with a glass of cham-

pagne, and it's not surprising that some of England's former friends are isolationists today. The trouble was that the British envoy and his attachés gave the impression to many people in official Washington, who would have been glad to know them better, that they were content with the friendship of a little group of socially prominent Americans, and that the rest of the country didn't matter. Only the merest handful of Senators were ever asked to dine at the Embassy, until Lord and Lady Halifax instituted a belated streamlining of British diplomacy.

In the meantime, the Nazi diplomatic blitzkrieg was in full swing. German diplomats in Washington were not attempting to convert to Nazism. They aimed at creating pools of anti-British, isolationist or pacifist sentiment in places that would count later on. Consular officers who had been snubbed by the British while abroad, minor officials in Government departments who did not "rate" the British Embassy list, were picked up wholesale by the Germans and treated with exuberant cordiality.

British diplomacy continued its slow waltz in Victorian time. The younger members went to horse shows and races in Virginia, week-ended in country houses, summered at smart resorts, rose late, drank cocktails or tea with the smart set, just because it *was* smart. It never occurred to them that diplomacy was no longer a career for a gentleman—that it had become a job for a specialist.

The British Foreign Office, jarred by American reaction to Chamberlain and Munich, decided that something was amiss with British propaganda in the U. S. A. There *was* something amiss—it simply didn't exist. In the nine years of his residence in Washington, Sir Ronald

Lindsay held *one* press conference, and that conference was ordered from London. He knew some journalists, it's true, but they were those who had ceased to be reporters and who had acquired dignity by mounting a literary Olympus from which they dictated Policies to Heads of States. The intelligentsia read this favored few, but the public gathered its impressions from the men who reported news, and reporters were not being offered the British point of view with a dish of tea. And this was the state of affairs at a time when whole sections of the American public were firmly convinced that there was a "high-pressure" British Propaganda machine at work in the U. S. A.!

The spirit of Munich was marching on. American papers were indulging in an orgy of Chamberlain jokes and cartoons, and British prestige reached a new low. The world was approaching another crisis—something had to be done to tighten the strings of the Empire, to mend Britain's diplomatic fences. Downing Street went into labor and produced an idea.

The young King and Queen were dispatched to Canada on a goodwill tour. They could hardly ignore Canada's powerful neighbor while they were on the North American continent, so a visit to Washington was included in the Royal itinerary.

At the news that Their Majesties would visit the Capital of the U. S. A., Washington went into a state of social jitters that has not been equalled in generations, and Chamberlain's shortcomings were forgotten. British Royalty was coming to Town!

From November, 1938, through the spring of 1939, the

King and Queen were the main topics of conversation in Washington drawing rooms. The speculations about the coming visit were endless. How long would they stay? Where would they sleep? Who would be asked to meet them? Would there be a large reception at the White House in their honor?

When it became known that the British Embassy would give a garden party for the King and Queen to which thirteen hundred people would be commanded, a state of semi-hysteria gripped nearly everyone in the Social Register, and a lot of people who were not in the Register, but who felt that they had other claims on Royalty. Ladies who pretended to Family Trees dating back to Norman times began to write in to the Embassy. Pasteboards were hurriedly left at the massive doors by numbers of tardy callers so that Lady Lindsay's secretary would not have the "she hasn't called this season" excuse for barring a name. The wives of United States legislators were not yet excited over the greatest social event that had ever been scheduled in the Capital. They were serenely certain that all of the "Hill" would be asked to meet England's rulers and were wondering whether it would be "American" to go. . . .

The excitement mounted in Washington when it finally leaked out that there were to be a great many out-of-town guests—that a painful process of elimination would have to be applied to local names. The British Embassy was up against a real problem—there was a definite limit beyond which the list could not be stretched. Convenience in handling the guests, the safety of the young

monarchs had to be considered. The New York police had already informed the State Department that they could not take the responsibility of allowing Their Majesties to ride up Fifth Avenue, but would insist that they approach the city by water because the tall buildings of New York offered excellent vantage posts for would-be snipers. The British Embassy had to be certain that no doubtful character could enter its doors with the guests and Lady Lindsay would not go beyond the number of names which could be easily checked at the entrance. Official Washington alone exceeded, by thousands, the limit fixed. The culling process was not easy. Whom to choose? whom to leave out? It was like walking on eggshells.

Lady Lindsay and her well-meaning secretary, Miss Irene Boyle, did their conscientious best and succeeded beyond the wildest hopes of England's most fervent enemies. They managed, in one fell swoop, to insult half the Senate, three-fourths of the House, and all of the Washington press.

When it dawned upon congressional wives that a mere handful of them were going to be asked to meet the King and Queen, the controversy already raging in social Washington spread to the Hill, and the fears of the White House over the political repercussions of the visit began to be realized.

Few knew that Mr. Roosevelt had been dismayed at the news that the King and Queen would probably include the Capital of the U. S. A. in their American tour.

Nobody understood better than the President that any



sign of cooperation, in 1939, between the two great seapowers would be hailed as "un-neutral" by large sections of Congress and the press.

Their Majesties could hardly be declared unwelcome, however, when with London's official notice to Washington of the Royal intention to visit Canada came an unofficial feeler about a possible trip to the United States. George and Elizabeth, were, of course, declared welcome and invited to stay at the White House.

That gesture of courtesy from the Head of one State to the rulers of another gave a fresh impetus to the speculations which were being bandied about in Senate corridors as to the real purpose of the trip to Washington. Isolationist members of the two Houses had already declared that it was a Roosevelt coup, designed to sell out American democracy to the British throne. The theories multiplied—Roosevelt would present the American fleet to His Majesty as a little souvenir of the visit, or he would pledge military support over the after-dinner coffee and cigars. The White House began to be worried at the increasing anti-British tone of certain elements in Congress.

President Roosevelt had set his heart on having the Arms Embargo lifted from the Neutrality Law. The Chief Executive was convinced that world war was not further off than the autumn of 1939. He thus warned House and Senate leaders.

The hubbub over the impending visit of British Royalty reached such alarming proportions that Administration strategists in Congress decided that there would be no hearings on the revision of the Neutrality Law until

after the departure of England's King and Queen. Senator Guffey summed it up: "If hearings are going on while they are here, some very rude things will be said on the Floor about them and the reasons for their trip to America."

Social Washington, however, was engulfed in a wave of pro-British sentiment. From November to April, hostesses who possessed large houses, worried themselves into a decline about where British Royalty would sleep. The ladies pointed out that the White House is a very modest dwelling designed for the Executive of a democracy and not for a King and Queen. It was known that etiquette required that the Royal Party spend one night in the White House. The rest of the visit was occupying the dream-life of the more ambitious of the wealthy ladies. Royalty had taken over private homes before. Here was a chance to make history—imagine being able to point out in years to come the very bed in which Queen Elizabeth had slept! There *was* a precedent—the Prince of Wales had stayed in the Leiter mansion when he visited Washington in 1924. King Prajadhipok of Siam had occupied the Larz Anderson house in 1931.

Several matrons, despairing of drawing the Royal Pair, would have settled for a lady-in-waiting. The White House announced that the King and Queen would stay in the modest dwelling of the Executive of a democracy and that Queen Elizabeth would occupy Lincoln's bedroom. With that announcement, the excitement over the Royal Residence subsided.

In the meantime, the First Lady was having house-keeping worries over the impending visit—how to get the

mice out of the upstairs closets. What to do with the mountains of luggage and the numerous ladies-in-waiting. The mice—economic royalists—had been living comfortably in the closets for generations and had resisted strenuous efforts to dislodge them. The need for closet space was urgent—experts were called in.

The White House could accommodate the Royal Retinue of ten persons, but there was no place for the retinue's retinue. It was decided that all of the Royal party would be quartered within the "British Empire." White House secretaries were busily contacting the British Embassy and the Legations of the Dominions. Finally, everyone was provided for. Some were given beds at the South African Legation, others at the Canadian.

Lady Marler, wife of the late Minister to Washington from Canada, took care of Canadian Premier Mackenzie King, and his suite. Their Majesties' "plateman" was also quartered at the Canadian Legation. A "plateman" is a man who valets silver. He accompanied the royal knives and forks all the way from England to see that no profane hands touched Their Majesties' personal tableware. Royalty has travelled with its own silver and attendant "plateman" since the days of Queen Elizabeth.

There was not a segment of official Washington which remained unaffected by the imminence of Royalty. The Protocol Division of the State Department was having its own worries about those four fateful days. Chief Summerlin and his aides had to handle not only the complex details of the visit, but also innumerable letters from everywhere in the United States.

Whole groups of the American public were suddenly

overcome with a desire to strengthen the ties between England and America. Big and Little Business was at this time whole-heartedly pro-British. Manufacturers of fine silk stockings, special English-style bacon and superior American suspenders wrote into the State Department and offered their specialties to the King and Queen. The offerings varied but each letter contained the same stipulation—that the maker must present the gift in person.

The Washington press, of course, was immersed in Royalty from dawn to dark. Every item connected with the visit of George and Elizabeth, every bit of information about the festivities in their honor, every detail that could be gleaned from the White House, the State Department, or the British Embassy, was "copy." The feminine press took possession of the Queen from her "hair do" to her slippers. Her wardrobe had been "released" by the Office of the Lord Chamberlain and was occupying columns of print. The Birmingham Chamber of Commerce, concerned about the "ferocious American mosquitoes," presented Queen Elizabeth with a dozen pairs of specially treated silk stockings guaranteed to repel the attack of the most carnivorous insects.

News leaked out that the White House had received a confidential communication from Buckingham Palace describing the sleeping habits of Their Majesties—the kind of sheets to which they were accustomed, and the color and weight of the down-comfort Her Majesty preferred for June nights. Buckingham Palace had evidently accepted the decree of the Foreign Office that Washington had become a temperate climate since 1930 when the diplomats' hill allowance was discontinued.

But though the newspaper girls were very much occupied with Her Majesty's impending visit and with description of her person and her habits, they were not making a series of respectful curtsies in print. It is a time-honored privilege of the American press, which it lustily upholds, to be disrespectful, upon occasion, of Place and Person. The Women's National Press Club of Washington gave a party at which they poked amiable fun at the White House and at the coming visit of British Royalty. Lady Lindsay was one of the honor guests—she showed no indication of finding the wisecracks funny. In the exercise of their inalienable right to be unimpressed by Position, the newspaper women had overlooked the fact that an American woman married to a foreign official is in a somewhat peculiar position. It would be tactless of her to laugh at her own government—suicidal to poke fun at that of her husband—whatever the temper of her mind.

The British sometimes cut off the heads of their kings, but they do not make them the subject of public humor. Poor Lady Lindsay's troubles were just beginning as a result of one of those little tragi-comic misunderstandings which plague British-American relations. She was classified as a poor sport by some of the ladies of the press.

The stories from Washington about the coming visit began to take on a critical tone. Newspapermen, occupied with the political implications of the historic event, gave their imaginations full play. Some of the more alarmist took the view that a hundred and fifty years of immunization would not be proof for Americans against physical contact with Royalty. As soon as the Royal feet

touched our soil, masses of citizens were in danger of falling upon their knees and begging Their Majesties to overlook the American Revolution and take the United States back into the Commonwealth!

High officials of Downing Street seldom read American newspapers. But one of the many attachés in the British Embassy in Washington has the task of clipping everything published in the United States concerning the British Empire. These clippings, when they reach the Foreign Office in London, are usually filed away with the red pencil annotation—SBR (seen but not read). The extraordinary volume of clippings from Washington during the weeks preceding the visit of the British Sovereigns attracted attention. Downing Street took notice and discovered to its intense dismay that while the American press had accepted the King and Queen as heaven-sent copy, it was also giving space to much unfriendly speculation as to the reasons for the visit.

The British Foreign Office, really alarmed, sent a cable to Sir Ronald which in paraphrase meant: "For God's sake *do* something about the American Press!"

By this time all of Sir Ronald's worst fears about journalism had been justified, but he was a good soldier and he obeyed orders. He announced a Press Conference. Some sixty newsmen gathered in the hall at the foot of the marble stairs. The squirming ambassador met them in the entrance and addressed them from the bottom steps, pleading lack of chairs to seat them all.

Shy Sir Ronald was caught right in the midst of a diplomatic nightmare—sixty strange pairs of ears were waiting to turn whatever he might say into "journalese." He

addressed them in about five hundred words. The first four hundred and eighty were a carefully prepared statement which boiled down to nothing. His last words—an afterthought—were full of dynamite. His Excellency, in referring to the already controversial garden party, said: "As for the garden party, it's just like heaven, some are chosen, some are not!"

When the list of those who had been bidden to "heaven" was definitely released, the buzzing reached epic proportions. The howls grew louder on every side as omissions began to register.

The Minority Leader of the Senate and Mrs. McNary had not received an invitation. Up until a few days before the party, veteran isolationist leader Hiram Johnson had not been asked. He was hopping mad and barked: "After all, the Senate is merely the treaty-making body of the United States and *not* the Social Register." Just why Johnson failed to get an invitation is a mystery. His name should have been automatically included as a member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee which was supposed to be invited in toto.

The Chief of Naval Operations, now Ambassador to Vichy, and Mrs. Leahy, were not on the original index. The list of omissions grew longer and longer. Sensible people were merely amused. Many more were resentful.

Lady Lindsay and her secretary had adopted a rule of thumb for official Washington. From the Hill, they had asked the Heads of Committees of both Houses, and all the members of each Foreign Relations Committee—with the exception of Hiram Johnson.

From the Diplomatic Corps, ambassadors, ministers and their counsellors, were to don high hats and frock coats on that June afternoon. Certain officials from the State Department were included. The other guests were drawn from people who could have expected a presentation at Court if they had found themselves in London during the Season. They were socially prominent individuals from New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore and Washington.

The omitted congressional wives were in an uproar. Several wives of Representatives called the State Department and demanded to know why they hadn't been asked. They insisted that their constituents expected them to meet the Queen and that home-town papers had been asking for descriptions of their gowns. When the State Department replied that it had nothing to do with the British Embassy list, one angry lady made a dire threat. She announced that if an invitation were not forthcoming, she would be compelled to tell the folks back home that she *had* been asked and had *refused* on the ground that "to meet Royalty was un-American."

White House social secretaries were besieged by wives of Senators who insisted that a failure to be publicized as present at the epoch-making garden party would be harmful to their husbands' political prestige back home—and by implication to the President's New Deal supporters. The wife of one Senator illustrated the lack of political wisdom of the British Embassy's "rule of thumb" method. She pointed out that the Head of the Memorial Committee—a political back number of the Senate—had been included because he was a Committee Head, while



her husband, one of the pillars of that body, hadn't been asked.

Confident that the two legislative bodies were to be asked in toto, to the party, the ladies had been debating whether a curtsy was undemocratic—whether a long dress would be appropriate. It had become quite an Issue. Some of the congressional women were in a state of enraged pique when it became apparent that the Issue was purely academic as far as they were concerned. And as the ladies got mad their husbands' temperatures rose. The isolationists were sure they were being discriminated against socially because of their political opinions. The neglected interventionists were furious because they were being ignored by the Representatives of one of the countries they were trying to aid.

The furor reached such proportions that the harassed Lindsays did not know which way to turn.

An unexpected ally sprang to their side. Between huge, shy, conservative Scotsman, Ronald Lindsay, and minute, red-faced, conservative Texan, Jack Garner, there existed a real sympathy. The Vice President's political sense was offended at the threatened fiasco of the Visit. Garner knew all about pulling wires. To watch all the wrong ones being pulled and to hear the dissonant twang pained him. It pained him so much that the staunch isolationist called up his friend, the British Ambassador, and suggested that the Garden Party list be reopened—to include, at the very least, *all* of the Senators and their wives.

Sir Ronald followed the Vice President's suggestion and the omitted senatorial families got invitations to the garden fete just a few days before the event. There was

no time to buy new frocks, to have white gloves cleaned, to decide the perplexing question: "To curtsy or not to curtsy?" Still it was better late than never—Garner was right; some of the uproar subsided. Hard-working, earnest Senator Claude Pepper breathed a sigh of relief. The Revision of the Neutrality Law was coming up soon—it was no time to take chances with that vexatious human trait—vanity.

The Florida Senator never forgot those harrowing days before the Garden Party. Only a few months ago the Peppers gave a luncheon for Noel Coward in the Senate restaurant. Before lunch we all went into the Senate Gallery to show the British playwright one of the rarest spectacles in the modern world—an elected legislature in session. Coward made a wry face—Burton Wheeler had the floor! During lunch, the question of British propaganda in the U. S. A. came up. Coward had never heard of the fracas over the Garden Party and could hardly believe his ears. Claude Pepper told him: "If British-American relations could survive that garden party, they could survive anything."

Thanks to Garner's intervention, the Senate wives calmed down but things didn't smooth out so easily as far as the House was concerned. It was too late to include hundreds of more people. Luther Johnson, veteran Texas legislator, who was doing rodeo-work for the Administration on the Neutrality Revision, was worried about the outcome.

The White House with an eye on the Arms Embargo was beginning to wish that Royal Garden Parties had never been invented. One of Mr. Roosevelt's Secretaries,

after a hard day spent in trying to smooth out the ruffled feelings of the Solons who had no use for Royalty but who were furious at not being asked to meet the King and Queen, indulged in a rare moment of philosophizing: "The Garden Party will show up in the House vote on the Neutrality Law. People are the raw material of history—it's amazing how *human* human beings can be—little things *do* affect big issues."

Poor Sol Bloom, who had done his level best to smooth matters out in the House of Representatives, unwittingly made them worse. He and his family were automatically included in all the events connected with the Royal Visit. Chairman McReynolds of the Foreign Relations Committee was ill, and Bloom, second-in-line, replaced him officially. This and the fact that he failed to get his neglected colleagues invited to the Garden Party did not help in the spade work he was doing for the revision of the Neutrality Law and the lifting of the Arms Embargo.

The Diplomatic Corps and Congress were seeing eye-to-eye for the first time in history. The Corps which had also been invited fractionally to the reception had its own indignant reaction to the whole affair. It was the plain duty of the President and Mrs. Roosevelt, the foreigners decreed, to invite everyone to an enormous "fete" in honor of the Royal visitors. They even picked out the scene for the Presidential reception—it should be held at Mt. Vernon where there was space enough to accommodate all who had any claim to an invitation to meet Their Majesties.

The White House could hardly explain, that in 1939

too much fuss in Washington over George the Sixth and his Elizabeth would have immediately raised the cry of "Anglo-American collusion" throughout the country.

The Vice President was having a grand time. He had no responsibility for the Royal Visit and could forget his isolationist principles for the duration.

He fell a willing victim to the Queen's charm and grace. He declared himself as completely conquered by the lovely Scotch lassie and drank enthusiastically to the health of the Royal Pair.

On the night of the dinner at the British Embassy in honor of President and Mrs. Roosevelt, he found himself unable to attend. Their Majesties were hosts in their own Embassy and the dinner table had to be rearranged at the last minute. It was probably the first time in history that a Royal table had to be hastily reseated for anything less than a death or a major disaster.

There was one group in Washington which thoroughly and unreservedly enjoyed the visit of the Royal Britishers. That was the staff of the Nazi Embassy. They could hardly believe their eyes and ears—it couldn't have been more satisfactory if Hitler, himself, had arranged it all. The dreaded flirtation between the two democracies was turning into something more like a behind-the-fence cat and dog fight. To Chargé d'Affaires Thomsen of the Nazi Embassy staff the whole thing seemed so preposterous that he suspected a deep-seated catch in it somewhere.

A few days before the arrival of the Royal Couple, the jovial Chief of Protocol, George Summerlin, joined me

for an after-dinner chat at a legation party. Thomsen, also a guest, brought his chair up to ours and inquired: "Won't there be a Review of the American Fleet in honor of the King and Queen?" Summerlin answered discreetly that no such thing was included on the over-loaded program of Their Majesties. Piped up a feminine voice from a nearby group: "Of *course* not, Herr Thomsen! The American Public would *never* stand for such a thing." The Nazi Chargé d'Affaires looked pleased. . . .

Washington was like anything but Sir Ronald's heaven on that hot day in June, as the fateful hour drew near. I had watched two years before, the arrival of the same Royal couple in frenzied Paris. The French Capital was vibrating to the presence of Royalty like a plucked violin string. The whole population was wildly enthusiastic. On the day of the landing of the King and Queen, women had begun to settle themselves on camp stools along the roped-off Champs Élysées at four o'clock in the morning. Paris concierges were swaggering through the street in knee breeches and powdered wigs and were proudly exchanging greetings with the crowds—they had stepped back into history with joy. Because of their established identities with the Sûreté Générale (the French secret police), they had been picked to serve as waiters and extras at the numerous festivities. During the four days of the visit, there were street dances, music and hilarity in the open squares of the city. The people of Paris were celebrating in their own way, while French officialdom entertained British royalty in the palaces built by French kings. Not only was Paris vibrating atavistically to the

presence of a King and Queen, but it accepted the visit as a symbol of the help that would come from across the Channel in the dark days that lay ahead. Women with tears in their eyes were calling George and Elizabeth "les sauveurs"—the saviors.

The King and Queen were approaching the Capital of the United States of America. Curious but undemonstrative crowds, lined the streets as they rode up Pennsylvania Avenue. All the quills of a nation born in rebellion against a throne were standing up straight, but all the curiosity of a Republican country about a "real live" King and Queen was wide awake. The young Queen's beauty and charm were pulling hard against American suspicion of hereditary authority. The struggle was almost visible, but Elizabeth had what it takes. As she smiled and bowed, plain work-a-day Washington took her into its heart and the crowds began to wave as the young couple went by.

The weather smiled upon the garden party, perhaps too warmly, on that sunny June day. Lady Lindsay's famous rose trees were in full bloom. The terraced gardens stretched like huge green velvet steps down Massachusetts Avenue Hill. Refreshment tents of brightly striped awnings dotted the gardens. An enormous circus tent had been set up in the center of the beautiful lawn; Lady Lindsay was taking no chances with the Washington weather and had provided shelter for the lightly frocked ladies in case of unexpected rain.

Lyons, the famous English chain of restaurants, had

sent sandwiches and cakes from London for the *al fresco* buffets of the famous event. There is an unwritten law in all British diplomatic missions abroad that Lyons must be their caterer for important occasions, whenever practicable. Edward, Duke of Windsor, had invested the major part of his personal fortune, left him by his grandmother, in Lyons stock. In addition to the Lyons delicacies, rushed over by fast boat, baskets of fresh strawberries, bowls of heavy yellow cream and huge quantities of punch were set out on the tables.

The ladies had settled the burning problem of what to wear to a Royal Reception by appearing in everything from long afternoon frocks and floppy hats to short dresses with bright accessories. Some of the men, who had visited England and who had attended the famous Ascot races in the Royal enclosure, had fished out of the mothbags their grey frockcoats and light "toppers." Others appeared in the conventional black cutaway, striped trousers and silk tubes. A few gentlemen from the "Hill," mindful of home-town reactions, braved the rigid British protocol and appeared in linens and panamas.

In strict keeping with Buckingham Palace ceremonial, the guests were already assembled before Their Majesties put in their appearance. Vice President and Mrs. Garner, the Cordell Hulls, the Morgenthau, and a number of hand-picked American high officials were gathered on the stone terrace above the gardens. They were to be formally introduced to Their Majesties on British soil by Sir Ronald Lindsay. After chatting with this select company, the King and Queen went down into the garden

and "were allowed to circulate freely," as Sir Ronald expressed it. The Ambassador accompanied the King and occasionally beckoned to some distinguished face in the crowd to approach and be introduced to His Majesty. The same procedure was adopted by Lady Lindsay in regard to the Queen.

Sir Ronald's many years of social experience on the Washington stage stood him in good stead. He had absorbed more information about Capital Society than one would have expected of an absent-minded man. He had evidently guessed what could happen to a "freely circulating" monarch. A number of attempts by garden party guests to turn a casual Royal greeting into a real conversation ("I had the honor of being presented to His Majesty, your late father, Sire." "I have been presented at Court, Sire!") were suppressed by the shy envoy with surprising firmness.

George and Elizabeth smiled through the heat and the crowds. They gave their best as standard bearers of the Empire and as Chamberlain's Special Ambassadors of goodwill to the New World. Little did the perspiring monarchs dream of the storm still raging among the wives of the neglected American politicians.

The revision of the Neutrality Law was passed in early July, 1939, but the Administration's effort to remove the Arms Embargo failed. The Amendment to maintain the ban on the sale of arms won out. The Administration lost by just two votes. Representative Luther Johnson discovered afterwards that six of his colleagues who had pledged their support, had spent the evening of the vote on a hotel terrace watching a floor show. It was not until



after the outbreak of war that the Arms Embargo was lifted.

The Garden Party had come and gone. The instrument to measure the effect of wounded vanity on world history has not yet been invented. That famous event would have been an interesting first experiment.

Sir Ronald Lindsay had reached the age of retirement but had been held over in his post because of the projected visit. The London Foreign Office was looking for his successor, and Washington was scanning the lists of "possibles" with great interest. The betting gave handsome Anthony Eden first place. Cynical Sir Nevile Henderson, Britain's envoy to Berlin, was runner-up.

A dark horse got it. Lord Lothian, eleventh Marquis of Lothian, Lord Newbattle, Earl of Lothian, Baron of Jedburgh, Earl of Ancrum, Baron of Nesbit, Baron Long-Newton and Dolphington, Marquis of Brien, was named as His Majesty's Ambassador to Washington. Behind these nine historic titles hid one of the ablest of English journalists, Philip Kerr, as he was known before two cousins died and left him a string of glittering names.

The Foreign Office had newly become aware of the importance of press contacts in America. There had been something very wrong with them up to date. Lothian had been in the newspaper profession since 1920 when he ceased to act as Lloyd George's secretary. A journalist might be the answer to the Washington post, and Lothian's name was given serious consideration. A large faction in the Foreign Office, however, was opposed to his appointment. He was known to be "pro-American"

and might send prejudiced reports back to England!

Lothian himself was not particularly enthusiastic about coming to Washington. He was a bachelor in reduced circumstances—the titles he had inherited were not tied up in golden ribbons.

When he was in London, Lord Lothian used to live in “chambers”—bedroom, sitting room and bath. He spent most of his time, however, at “Blickling Hall” in Norfolk. “Blickling Hall” was one of the oldest mansions in England. It was built by the family of Anne Boleyn.

That ancestral estate he loved. It was a rambling and somewhat decrepit red brick, ivy-clad house. There were few servants; just the old family butler, a maid and a cook. Lothian was happy there. He used to wear an open-neck shirt and an old pair of baggy grey flannel trousers which had not felt the pressing iron since they had been purchased in Paris. The most informal atmosphere prevailed in that historic Norfolk seat of the Lothian family, where the eleventh Marquis gathered all the brains he could find in England; American, German, French and Italian intellectuals made it a center.

The Ambassadorship did not tempt the former Philip Kerr. It took all the powers of persuasion of his old friend and mentor, John L. Garvin, editor-in-chief of Lord Astor's *London Observer*, to prevail upon him to accept the job and to induce the Foreign Office to send him.

Lothian had heard fearsome tales of the “tigresses” of Washington and he warned the Foreign Office before his departure that he would not go in for “dowager dinners.” In no city in America are there more wealthy unattached females in proportion to the population, than

in Washington. They come to the Capital flush with the earnings of the dear-departed—drawn by the stories of the “glamour” of the Diplomatic Corps and of official entertaining. They will form a “salon,” guide the footsteps of a coming but unsophisticated young Senator, seat an ambassador or a justice on their right hand, marry—who knows? Perhaps an Excellency!

Lothian, intelligent, fifty-seven, possessing an old estate in England and enough titles to cover a whole harem with glory, was fair prey and he knew it. Many Washington hostesses were busy impressing his string of names upon their memories—something His Lordship, himself, had never taken the trouble to do! Even after Munich the quotation on British peers was high and the new Ambassador could expect a siege.

But Lothian skillfully side-stepped society. He pleaded affairs of state in order to avoid purely social functions. He started entertaining but with a definite purpose in mind. He was belatedly filling up the gaps left by his predecessors in the Embassy lists. Politicians and newspapermen were asked to his informal “black tie” dinners. One of his first invitations of the winter of 1940 went to Senator and Mrs. Gerald P. Nye who promptly turned it down. Those who accepted found that the huge “maternity home” was a surprisingly cosy place. Fires now burned brightly in the drawing room hearths, which heretofore had gaped coldly at the ladies who would pull scarves around their shoulders after dinner. Somehow, for Lothian, the fireplaces drew, and his spaniel slept comfortably on the marble tiles.

The Ambassador's chief relaxation was to motor

through the countryside around Washington. He liked to stop at gasoline stations and general stores and join in cracker-barrel discussions. The only Catholic peer who ever became a Christian Scientist, he had a mystical belief in the triumph of right thinking and found comfort in these ramblings and in his talks with simple folk.

The Ambassador's car was stopped once in Virginia for exceeding the fifty-five mile speed limit. He calmed the chauffeur, who wanted to insist upon diplomatic immunity, and promised the State trooper that henceforth the rules would be strictly observed. The Virginia motorcycle cop and the British ambassador engaged in quite a conversation and ended by discovering a common ancestor from Mayflower days.

Lothian arrived in Washington during the "close both eyes and pretend that America and England have no common interest" period. He handled skillfully more than one vexatious problem during his tenure. His previous existence had been that of an active journalist and an independent intellectual, but as British Ambassador, his duty forced him to present the bureaucratic point of view to the American State Department—conveyed to him by London with preambles and citations of precedent dating back to the 16th century. He streamlined the Foreign Office's "verbal notes" which are always in writing—and after discharging his duty, would say with a twinkle in his eye: "Now that this foolishness is over, what can we do about it? Can Joe Kennedy stir the British Foreign Office up?" The mail interference question rose to plague him. He finally prevailed upon London to stop searching for diamonds and five dollar bills in air mail to Germany

from the residents of the United States. His contention that American irritation over the interference far outweighed the amount of contraband recovered, was eventually accepted by London.

Just a year after his arrival, Lord Lothian died. He succumbed to a heart attack brought on by overwork and strain. His religion forbade a physician's presence at his bedside and he died alone.

His death could not have come at a more inopportune moment. Major affairs of State are transacted nowadays over the trans-Atlantic telephone, but an ambassador is more than a telephone operator. The British government had finally come to realize that the right man in the right place could do much good with the people at large. The short term of office of the deceased Marquis had taught them that.

Churchill did not lose time in selecting Lothian's successor. It had to be a "name." A name which would make the American people sit up and take notice. The Duke of Windsor was in the neighborhood. He was suggested by some as the ideal man for the job. After short consultations between London and Washington, he was eliminated.

The name of no less a person than the Foreign Secretary himself was transmitted to the State Department. His political background, his uprightness, his deep-seated conviction that nobody should be allowed to trifle with principles, made him the ideal man for the job. Although many others might have refused to step down

from boss to subordinate, Lord Halifax accepted the ambassadorship with joy.

Halifax, with his religious background, his painfully born conviction that the present struggle is one of good against evil, is the type of Britisher any New Englander would understand. Right is right—wrong is wrong. When that becomes the problem for the Halifax type, there is no further room for discussion. If Lord Halifax were convinced that he could serve his country best by dying at 7 a. m. the next day, he would ring for his valet and tell him: "Breakfast at six—I have an early appointment tomorrow."

Mr. Churchill felt that his Foreign Secretary could be of greater use to the Empire in Washington, than in London. Halifax had undergone a revolutionary change of mind. From a devotee of appeasement he had become an advocate of war to the bitter end. His former appeasement convictions would help him to understand better the trends in the United States and his present "never surrender" ideas might help America to grasp the root of the British stand.

The arrival of the former Viceroy of India and heretofore His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, was preceded by much publicity—a new departure for the Foreign Office.

Not so long ago Downing Street would have considered it undignified to publicize a member of His Majesty's Diplomatic Corps. But the British had finally learned the lesson expressed by Mrs. Roosevelt when she said: "I have found out that it is better to give the news-

paper people the stories they want—they are going to get them somehow.”

From the confidential files of the Foreign Office, stories about His Lordship's life were transmitted to Washington to be used in small but regular doses by the newly organized British propaganda services. The stories all tended to humanize Halifax who had acquired the reputation of being unbending and formal. The new ambassador's political shrewdness was not, however, considered good publicity. The American public might be suspicious of too able an envoy from England. But it leaked out eventually that Halifax could match the shrewdest of Oriental negotiators.

While Viceroy of India, he had had the unenviable task of discussing with Mahatma Gandhi the question of home rule for India. The talks between the two deeply religious men were lengthy and difficult. Whenever Gandhi was placed in a tight spot, he would ask for time for prayer and inspiration. This took hours, sometimes days. On one occasion it was the Viceroy who seemed to be cornered. Gandhi wanted an immediate answer. It was the turn of Lord Halifax to seek inspiration. After a number of hours, Gandhi left him. The next day the conversations were resumed.

The British Foreign Office, bombed into a realization that the world was changing, warned Lady Halifax that her role as Ambassadors to the United States was not to be purely social. She was informed of the influence of American women on public opinion, and of the importance of the feminine press. Soon after her arrival, invitations to tea went out from the British Embassy to

women correspondents in Washington. Sniggered some of the girls: "Of course it is perfectly plain why we are being noticed by the British Embassy. The English are courting the press." In Lady Halifax's private sitting room, little tables were set for tea and the new Ambassador awaited her guests with trepidation. She admitted later, that she had never felt so shy in her life, but that the girls were nice and understanding, and that she enjoyed herself. After the conference, the lady reporters in discussing it decided that Lady Halifax was a sweet and earnest woman, who meant to "do a job."

The Foreign Office knew all about the isolationists and appeasers in the United States. Lord Halifax came well prepared to meet those pitfalls. But London could not guess that another menace awaited British envoys: that the over-exuberance of certain Americans in the presence of English titles could be as damaging to England's cause as the charges of the isolationists.

One relief party after another had been organized in embassies and legations—since 1939—a solemn procession of black-creped "fetes" to raise money for war relief.

A super Aid-to-Britain sale was on the Washington calendar. The Lease-Lend Bill had passed. England was our unofficial ally. Feminine Washington turned out en masse to make the project a success. A section of a department store had been given for the three days of the sale. Waxed flowers, champagne, pictures, bric-a-brac, books, objets d'art had all been donated in quantity. Busy women from official circles gave their services from 8 a. m. to 6 p. m. The wives of anti-Axis diplomats lent a hand.



Mrs. James Forrestal, wife of the Undersecretary of the Navy, Mrs. Robert Lovett, wife of the new Assistant Secretary of War, were among the "salesgirls." Residential Washington was represented. Busy young mothers had left their bridge tables to do their bit.

On the last day of the sale, a Washington matron who prides herself on being late to dinner parties, arrived in the store near closing hour, with Lady Halifax in tow. She swept down the main aisle of the store, followed by the wife of the British Ambassador. Waving the aching society salesgirls aside, she warned in a loud voice: "Get out of the way, girls, get out of the way! Lady Halifax is coming through!" Lady Halifax looked dismayed. . . .

British diplomacy has definitely left the Victorian era. Under the new speed-up cards left at the British Embassy on Monday are returned on Wednesday. In the old era the follow-through would sometimes take weeks. Lady Halifax broke a precedent of long standing when she appeared in the drawing room of Mrs. Justice Black on a Supreme Court Monday—the day upon which the wives of Justices receive callers. The Ambassadors was calling *first* though all the books on precedence decree that it should be the other way.

During the seven months Lord Halifax has been in this country, he has made a real effort to understand it. His work is hard, his task sometimes ungrateful—but the Ambassador's simple and direct manner have already gained him many friends. He keeps interminable hours in his office at the Embassy, and has long conversations with high officials of the State Department. When he can snatch a few minutes from both, Halifax enjoys a walk

through Washington's pride: Rock Creek Park.

The new Ambassador willingly submits to the pranks, calculated to tickle the fancy of the American public, which his new publicity experts think up. He feeds popcorn to swans, talks to barefoot girls, rides on fire engines, and picks up hitchhikers. He was Viceroy of India under most trying and dangerous circumstances, and will probably survive the United States.

British diplomats are learning, at long last, to speak Americanese. Americans who have never heard of "Debrette's Peerage" are beginning to realize that a document called the "Magna Charta" means something in their daily lives—the right to breathe free air and to walk head up. It is England's man in the street who has been the most eloquent exponent of what his country means to him and to the world. It is the common tragedy of the two great democracies that the first effective British propaganda in the United States had to be written in the blood of England's people, and in the dust of her monuments.

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## II

### SWASTIKA IN TEACUPS

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THE USUAL flood of invitations was not forthcoming when the lovely blonde Lilo paid a visit in the spring of 1941, to the scene of her former social triumphs. Nor did Frau Scholz seem to resent the changed attitude of many of her Washington friends.

Teacup diplomacy was now over for Nazi diplomats. It was natural that social ostracism should be the result of their other activities and they were resigned to have it so.

Lilo stayed quietly in the house of an attaché in the German Embassy. There were one or two bids to lunch from still faithful friends but on each occasion Frau Scholz found herself alone with her hostess and was the recipient of an embarrassed explanation: "My dear, it is so much pleasanter to have you all to myself!" Lilo Scholz understood. Whom could a Washington hostess ask to meet the wife of Hitler's widely publicized S.S. agent in

1941? And yet just two years ago she had been in the midst of an incessant round of parties. In a town used to celebrities, rank and titles, the new First Secretary of the German Embassy and his wife had quickly achieved an unusual degree of popularity. So well liked did the young couple become in the Diplomatic Corps, in official and social Washington that even when Herbert Scholz appeared at the diplomatic reception in 1938 in his full S.S. uniform (instead of the customary white tie and tails) not a shudder ran through the bemedalled kid-gloved assembly. The Nazi diplomat's deliberate reminder that he belonged to the famous Hitler bodyguard regiment failed to ruffle the smooth waters of their popularity. It began to wane only after Herbert Scholz was publicly implicated before the Dies Committee as having a part in subversive activities.

It was not by routine or by accident that that particular couple had been ordered to the Capital of the United States in 1935. Nothing that went on in the German Foreign Office after the advent of Hitler was accidental. Scholz was personable and spoke English almost without an accent. His beautiful wife had been educated in the capitals of Europe. In Washington she found acquaintances and connections from all over the world.

Lilo Scholz looked like a streamlined version of Brunhilde. The tall, blonde and handsome couple made one stop to think about Hitler's race-superiority theory. They immediately became members of the Chevy Chase Country Club, where they golfed, swam, and dined with official and residential Washington. Everybody who is anybody in the Nation's Capital must be a member of

that exclusive club. In spite of the heavy initiation fee, there is an interminable waiting list. Many a nouveau riche has pulled more strings to become a member of Chevy Chase than to wangle an Embassy or a Legation abroad. In some cases, the latter was easier; it depended on the amount of cash the would-be envoy was willing to contribute to the treasury of the party in power.

Money is of no importance to the board of governors of Washington's premier club: the Family Tree is paramount. The membership, in addition to Washington's old residential families, includes many section heads of the State, War and Navy Departments.

In normal times, when the hands of the clocks in the three senior departments in Washington approach the hour of four, desks are quickly cleared and the various chiefs rush to Chevy Chase, just 15 minutes from the White House, for a late afternoon interlude of golf, tennis, or swimming. They spend the rest of the evening in the pleasant rural surroundings, sipping cocktails on the lawns; dining and dancing into the evening. Foreign diplomats are accepted as members of Washington's best club as a matter of courtesy, without having their names frozen on the waiting list. The mere fact that a man belongs to the "Corps" does not mean, however, that he is unreservedly accepted by the other members. He has to prove himself a good fellow before he becomes one of the crowd. It did not take Herbert Scholz long. His all around sportsmanship, his booming voice and easy back-slapping familiarity, so alien to the average diplomat, soon made him a favorite with the younger masculine members. He played games as they played them, adopted

their rules, adapted his way of life to theirs. Protocol did not exist for Scholz, and he made it plain that being a diplomat was a job and not a distinction. What he really liked to do was to get out for a hard game of tennis or golf. . . .

After a strenuous hour or two on the courts, or the links, the genial Herbert, freshly showered, would join the round table in the cocktail room. Young officers of the American Navy, or the Air Corps, would frequently be in the carefree group. Scholz was a most interesting talker, and he would tell them intriguing, if not always accurate, stories of what the German Navy and Air Force were doing. It was hot stuff for some of the young officers who could turn an afternoon's entertainment into interesting reports from "a confidential and reliable source." Herbert could take his cocktails without batting an eye and without missing his listeners' reactions or comments. Their manner of receiving his tales about German military developments gave him clues to what the American Navy and Aviation were *not* doing.

Herbert was able to enjoy club life, and at the same time to provide his government with a fairly accurate barometer of the state of development of the American military potential.

The willowy Lilo with her slim distinction was just the right sharp accent for Herbert's jovial informality. Social Washington accepted her as a scion of the old German aristocracy. Her father, a wealthy manufacturer, was Herr von Schnitzler. The distinguishing "von" had been a reward, however, for his share in the industrial development of his native city, Frankfurt-am-Main. Lilo,

indeed, was just as far from the "Frau" of the old Junker families, as she was from Hitler's regimented modern maiden. Not for her the flat heels, the square-toed shoes, the funny hats of the rigidly brought up women of the aristocracy. Not for her the unpowdered vigor of the Maedchen in uniform. She looked the product of "pluto-democracy"; chic, well dressed, cosmopolitan, a girl who had had all the advantages of a father's wealth. She became a favorite dancing partner of the younger crowd at the Club. So charming and so personable were the two Scholzes that Washington's "Four Hundred" became convinced that many of the tales about Nazi crudities were the invention of biased newspapermen. Scholz never lost an opportunity to emphasize the fact that his beloved Leader had done nothing more reprehensible than to discipline a communist threatened democracy.

When Nazi plans gained momentum Scholz's decided talents were needed in more important spheres than the social scene in Washington. He was ordered from the Embassy to the Consulate in Boston. It was there that his extra-curricular activities finally brought him under the scrutiny of the Dies Committee. Before Scholz left Washington, however, he had accomplished a delicate mission entrusted to him by his Fuehrer. It was he who shadowed Hitler's first envoy to the United States, Dr. Hans Luther. Luther was a left-over from democratic Germany, and Scholz saw to it that his chief did not falter in the dance of the Swastika, performed among the Dresden ornaments of the mid-Victorian German Embassy.

It was into an antiquated mansion surrounded by

tourist homes, that Hitler's first envoy, Hans Luther, moved with his family, when he arrived in Washington. He felt immediately at home in the high-ceilinged, old-fashioned rooms. The heterogeneous collection of European furniture reminded him of the wealthy homes of his youth in the Rhineland. Nothing had been changed for more than a generation. Inside the gloomy entrance hall, two marble-topped Italian tables faced each other. The drawing room looked like the result of a wealthy Victorian's tour around the world. French tapestry covered the Louis XVI gold chairs. An Aubusson rug lightened the floor. Biscuit figurines, vases from Limoges, each contributed their special note of opulence.

A remarkable Sèvres table, inlaid with medallions illustrating the life of Napoleon and Josephine, had held the after-dinner coffee cups of the ladies during half a century of entertaining. When the covers were laid for one of Luther's rare formal dinner parties, Dresden ornaments, Nymphenburg china, delicate Venetian glasses to hold the vintage wines, made a table that was colorful if somewhat dissonant.

In all the furnishings of the reception rooms could be found that curious juxtaposition of the delicate and the massive, characteristic of a nation whose taste has been formed by rich but miscellaneous loot.

The arrival of Hitler's first ambassador to the United States was preceded by a blare of trumpets from Berlin. The Wilhelmstrasse knew that Washington follows diplomatic appointments with the same keen interest that bookmakers show in the form of horses before an important race. There was a good deal of betting as to



whom Hitler would send to the American Capital. Something entirely new was expected from the man who had set the Reichstag on fire. A Storm Troop leader in full uniform would not have been too startling. But the news that Hitler had picked for Washington a man who had served the Weimar Republic, a world figure identified with the Old Order, came as a distinct surprise.

In the advance notices of the appointment, Herr Goebbels was careful to point out that the Fuehrer could not have paid a more signal honor to the United States than to send a former Chancellor of Empire as Ambassador. Hans Luther would not depend upon the title of "Excellency" for distinction. He would actually shed lustre upon that title. Washington was properly impressed. Herr Goebbels carefully concealed, however, the background of Luther's appointment. His propaganda machine did not advertise the fact that when Luther agreed to serve Hitler, in 1933, it was a pistol-point marriage and not a free union.

Rotund, genial Hans Luther looked exactly like a burgher on a beer mug—from his shiny bald head to the creases of red fat on his neck, to the twinkle in his blue eyes, down to his prosperous paunch. He had ceased to be Chancellor in 1926, but was still President of the Reichsbank when Hitler took over the destinies of Germany. It was into his office in the Bank that two S.S. men marched one morning in May. Brandishing pistols at the former government leader's head, they announced: "You are under arrest, by order of the Fuehrer."

Luther would tell the story to his more intimate friends in Washington with great gusto. And the fact that he

was not a "Hitler man," but had escaped the concentration camp by accepting the Washington post, made him a most appealing figure. "I was sitting there at my desk," he would say. "Imagine my astonishment, when those two S.S. men in uniform broke in upon me and ordered me to jump up and follow them. I am not good at jumping (the rotund envoy's eyes would twinkle) so I just sat there and looked at them.

"Finally I asked: 'Are you acting upon the order of the Fuehrer?'

"'Jawohl' was the curt answer.

"'You will kindly permit me to use the telephone,' I said. And, without waiting for an answer, I picked up the receiver and asked to be connected with the office of the new Reichschancellor, Adolf Hitler.

"When I had Herr Hitler on the telephone, I asked him if he thought such treatment the due of a former Chancellor of the Empire, and if that was a way to reward one who had served his country long and well?

"The Fuehrer expressed his astonishment and asked to speak to one of the S.S. men. One of the guards took the telephone and after listening to a severe bawling out, which I could plainly hear, turned the receiver back to me.

"'Excellenz,' said Hitler, 'will you please come immediately to my office. I will receive you at once.'

"The S.S. men shoved their revolvers into their holsters and apologized for the mistake. They followed close upon my heels as I went out of my office, down the stairs and into their waiting automobile. The telephone call had suddenly changed them into a guard of honor! The

Fuehrer was charming, as he knows how to be. We had a long conversation during which he made it plain that the climate of Washington would certainly agree with my health, and that of my two daughters!" And so, the smiling Luther would conclude, "here we are!"

Hans Luther was ideally fitted for the job of transition ambassador. His roots were in old Germany, his class was the upper bourgeoisie. He could sell the new regime by making it appear not too dangerously unlike the old. The very solidity of his background talked for him. "Hitler," it seemed to say, "is just a passing phase. I am serving my *country*, which is the same old Germany of fairy tales, beer gardens, and good music."

The dream of bliss of a socially bent Washington hostess consists in having an Excellency on her right in the dining-room—and a perfect chef in the kitchen. The houses which rated entertaining ambassadors were relatively few and had long been listed by the professional social secretaries of the town who went on the theory that an Excellency must be fed off a gold plate and sit in a stately dining-room.

But Luther's ideas were different. The former Chancellor of democratic Germany was prepared to sell Hitler's Reich to the capital of the United States if he could do it. He was ready to launch a diplomatic putsch and the classical formulae were too restricted for him. Luther ignored the social secretaries' exclusive lists. No invitation was too modest, no acquaintance too insignificant for his attention.

He went out of his way to get in touch with people

who had even vague connections with Germany. Army, Navy and Consular officers who had been stationed abroad were asked to the Embassy.

Many of these officials lived modestly in small houses and were shy about accepting invitations from an ambassador. They felt that they could not return embassy hospitality. But Luther insisted that they come to his house to sample his imported beer and to make the acquaintance of the famous German metwurst—a wine-cured sausage. He would lament the dullness of the official life of a foreign representative in Washington and suggest smilingly: "May I invite myself to your house for a chin once in a while? You don't know what a joy it is to go informally into a real home!"

He would install himself comfortably in their living rooms and talk intimately about the problems of Germany and the post-war world. Luther did not even stand upon an ambassador's right to receive the first call. The smiling, round-faced envoy would ring a doorbell himself, and ask if he might come in for a glass of beer. Major-General Hoff, of German descent, was Chief of Ordnance of the U. S. Army when Luther arrived in Washington. The German Ambassador made the first call on the Hoffs, and it was not long before he was on an intimate footing in that household.

Luther paid relatively little attention to his colleagues in the Diplomatic Corps who spent their time entertaining each other. The ambassador's great good humor, his simplicity, his distinguished past, and the rumor that he was not in sympathy with the new regime gained him friends everywhere in American circles.

With his seventeen-year-old daughter, Gertrude, her small sister and their companion and chaperon, Frau Koerner, the ambassador established a home in the gloomy old embassy. There were parties for daughter Gertrude, but she was not allowed the freedom of her American friends. Papa was as strict about daughter's activities as he was liberal about his own.

Luther was anxious to learn all about America, but daughter was brought up according to the best German traditions. Wherever she went—Frau Koerner and her knitting went also, and Gertrude would say privately to her friends that though Papa Luther disapproved of Nazi methods, he was a super Fuehrer in the home.

The ambassador had made up his mind that his "back-fish" was going to marry Geritt von Haeften, a blond, neat, well-born attaché on his staff. The attaché and the unpowdered, scrubbed little Fraulein would avoid each other like poison—unless Papa was looking on, when they would smile dutifully at one another. The marriage took place when Gertrude was nineteen and after a brilliant wedding attended by the "who's who" of Washington, the young couple slipped away for a Bermuda honeymoon—a life of marital felicity and lots of children—by order of Papa. But each took a different boat!

Though Luther behaved like a Victorian father, he accepted Berlin's conception of the modern technique to be applied to the Washington scene. Berlin realized that the social-political patterns of the Capital in 1933 were no longer crystallized as they had been in Coolidge's and Hoover's time. Many influential newcomers to Washington were not socially inclined. This was not a Capital

city where an envoy who spoke six languages would be effective. Berlin knew that few of the cultured gentlemen who represented Europe in Washington had ever learned the Americanese which was used up on the "Hill." The neglect of Congress and the press by the diplomats of France and England had not been unnoticed by German observers. American public opinion was a plum which Hitler's new Germany needed and the former Reichschancellor of the German Republic was told to go after it. Luther had the task of reaching as many key Americans as possible in the shortest possible time.

The traditional embassy dinners—a maximum of thirty-six in the company, eighteen men and eighteen women—was an expensive, inefficient way in which to achieve the desired result. Granted that some bigwigs would always be included in these dinners, there would still be the inevitable deadwood caused by the necessity of finding odd partners of either sex in order to pair off the table.

Then, too, many people whom Luther wanted to reach were shy of formal parties. Most Congressmen were notoriously unsocial. Those who liked to "dress up" and go to embassy dinners could be counted with ease. There were others who had wives who would have liked to go but who were too timid to make the first steps—which consisted in leaving cards at embassy doors. A majority of Congressmen saw no reason why they should leave cards first on foreign envoys, anyway. Others thought Washington would be much better off if there were no foreigners in it. Embassy social secretaries, following the protocol, would not include people on an invitation

list if they had not deposited pasteboards. So a few Senators and a few members of the House did the going around for the rest of the "Hill." In the Senate, the Arthur Vandenberg, the McNarys, the Copelands, the William Kings, the Warren Barbour, the bachelor Capper and McAdoo, liked to dine out. Of the House, the Robert Bacons, the Dick Wigglesworths, the Ralph Churches, the Sol Blooms, the Chester Boltons, liked social life.

There was that other important factor in the formation of public opinion in the United States—the press. Herren Goebbels and Luther were aware of the power of this American fraternity, something so badly understood by most foreign diplomats. In many European countries the reporters for government-subsidized papers were just another set of civil servants, ranking lower than all the rest. Many a foreign envoy has been both startled and dismayed at the bad press he has acquired by talking to American journalists in the supercilious tone he used to newspapermen of his own country. Berlin knew that in the United States the press situation was different. Newspapermen were independent—they could be powerful, disagreeable and influential, and many of them didn't like to put on a white tie after a busy day.

Luther threw the Book of Etiquette in the fire and instituted his famous "bierabende"—for males only. They became a popular institution of the Nazi Embassy.

One particular bierabend—was a howling success. It was the last one, just before the Nazis marched into the Rhineland. It is still a vivid memory for some in Washington today. The stodgy old embassy underwent a startling

transformation for the evening. It was turned into a Bavarian Hofbrau Haus. Long tables, the kind that are found in the famous beer halls in Germany, had been placed in every room. Benches served as seats. Two native Bavarians in costume were dispensing imported beer from enormous kegs, drawing it off into genuine steins. Both the steins and the beer had been specially brought from Munich for the occasion.

The guests numbered some hundred and fifty men who had been carefully picked from the press and from Congress. Senators David Walsh from Massachusetts, Royal Copeland from New York, James Couzens and Arthur Vandenberg of Michigan, and Representative Sam McReynolds, chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House, and Representative Ham Fish were all there.

Among the journalists were Lyle Wilson (U.P.), James Wright (*Buffalo Evening News*), Ray Clapper (Scripps-Howard), Constantine Brown (*Washington Star*), Ulric Bell (*Louisville Courier-Journal*), Paul Y. Anderson (*St. Louis Post-Dispatch*), and George Abell (*Washington News*).

The Bavarians at the beer kegs were kept busy—another Bavarian wandered from room to room playing the accordion. Soon the rumble of male voices mounted to a roar—the party was on its way. Herr Luther beamed his satisfaction. It is always gratifying to be a successful host; it must be peculiarly so when one is escaping the concentration camp by fulfilling that role.

The attachés strolled from group to group jocularly assuring the guests that politics and controversial ques-



tions were taboo; this was just a nice friendly evening to show that men of goodwill were alike the world over and could find a common denominator in beer and song. Songs there were—German favorites in which everyone joined. Those who didn't know the words hummed the tune and as the evening waxed the songs grew louder. Everybody was having a good time. Good drinks, good food, gay music; no ladies expecting polite conversation, no pinching shoes, no tight collars to spoil the fun.

Herbert Scholz was even more informally dressed than the others—he had on his native Bavarian costume—heavy shoes, woolen socks, bare knees, short breeches, embroidered “bretelles” over a mountaineer's white shirt. Like his ambassador, he showed his pleasure at the success of the Hofbrau Haus on Massachusetts Avenue. Like his chief, he was glad to be in Washington. A friend of Roehm's, he had barely escaped assassination in Germany during that unsavory purge. There had been dark days when his life hung in the balance. His future father-in-law, Herr von Schnitzler, interceded for him with Hitler. Scholz lived to become a favorite of the Fuehrer's, and a number one man in the Nazi organization. So sure was he now of his position that he could afford to tell jokes on Hitler at Luther's bierabende. These stories all followed the same line. There was never any irreverent allusion to the Leader's habits or person. The jokes were political, and were offered as proof that the German people still had a sense of humor and that totalitarianism was just a passing phase—even a laughing matter.

He had not been in the Embassy long before Hans Luther realized that the substantial looking Scholz was

turning into a shadow—His Excellency's own. From the very first, the new secretary enjoyed a position of great privilege. Though ranking only as a First Secretary (fifth in line on the State Department Diplomatic List) he communicated directly with the Fuehrer instead of sending his reports over the desk of his Ambassador, as is the usual procedure. Arriving two years after Luther's appointment, one of Scholz's jobs was to check Herr Luther's loyalty to the new regime—to make certain that the Ambassador's zeal did not flag as Naziism gained momentum in Germany. Under his vigilant eye, the former Reichschancellor conscientiously served his country in Washington until he was dismissed to semi-exile in China as a reward for his efforts.

On that evening in February, just a month before the invasion of the Rhineland, the new watchdog of the embassy could find no fault with his Ambassador's efforts as host. The hilarious party was crowned with the lusty singing of the "Wacht am Rhein." Ham Fish, Representative from New York, sang louder than all the rest. The new diplomatic technique of the Hitler Reich was being applied to the Washington scene with great success.

March 6, 1936. The streets were deserted. It was 6 a.m. At that hour the capital sleeps soundly. Government clerks are an hour and a half from rising. Society has not even turned over in its bed. Only a few brave souls can be seen cantering in Rock Creek Park.

A number of Washington correspondents were rudely awakened by the ringing of their bedside telephones.

They were surprised to hear, at that early hour, a soft feminine voice, instead of the classical bark of the managing editor. It was the voice of Herr Luther's secretary and she had the same message for all of them. "Can you have breakfast with His Excellency at eight o'clock at the Embassy? The ambassador has some very important news to communicate!"

Berlin lives seven hours ahead of the capital of the U. S. A. It was afternoon in Germany and Nazi soldiers were streaming into the Rhineland. The news had already been flashed to Washington when the reporters arrived at the German Embassy. They were ushered into Herr Luther's study. The Ambassador appeared to be in high spirits. He was seated behind a big desk—there was a pleased smile on his round face. Behind him, rigidly at attention, stood his Counsellor of Embassy, and next-in-command, Rudolf Leitner.

Leitner was a Czech by birth, a former officer in the Austrian Army who had become a German citizen. He had married an American-born girl of German parents. Both of them spoke perfect English and were accepted as extremely cosmopolitan Germans in the Diplomatic Corps. Leitner, who had grown violent a few years earlier at the suggestion that Hitler might rule Germany some day, had learned to "heil" with good grace.

Those who knew the Leitner family well were not as much surprised at the conversion as were their more casual acquaintances. The Herr Doktor had already taken to some forms of Prussianism with enthusiasm. He thought nothing of ordering his wife, though she

would be all the way across a long living-room to fetch him a matchbox from a table not two feet away from his hand.

The former Chancellor of the Weimar Republic and the former Austrian citizen looked well pleased with life that morning, as the newsmen filed into the study. A younger and a slimmer Luther looked down upon the scene from a framed photograph hanging on the wall. It was Luther, as Chancellor of the Empire in the act of shaking hands with Aristide Briand of France, who had just fixed his signature to the (Locarno) parchment which was to guarantee Europe against future wars.

Luther, rubbing his hands together, asked his journalist friends whether they were hungrier for breakfast or for news.

"I have great news for you, gentlemen! The peace of Europe is assured! The last cause of friction between us and our former enemies is being removed. We are occupying the Rhineland at this moment. This is a memorable day for our two countries. I am happy to say that I can now look forward to a long period of peaceful collaboration—and now let's go to breakfast."

Newsmen are a notoriously skeptical lot. Neither Luther's undoubted charm, nor his excellent eggs and bacon could dim that particular trait of his guests. Upon leaving the German Embassy, several of them went to the nearest booth and phoned the French Embassy. A sleepy attaché was finally reached. He was asked to get a statement for the press from the Ambassador of the French Republic, M. Andre de Laboulaye. A few hours

later the answer came back that "Son Excellence" preferred not to make a statement until he had consulted the French Foreign Office.

Two days later, the Quai d'Orsay answered M. de Laboulaye that he was expected to use his own judgment as to whether or not a statement was desirable. His Excellency was in Washington, on the spot, he was told, and was expected to be informed about American affairs and opinions. De Laboulaye, a typical bureaucrat, decided that in diplomacy statics are preferable to dynamics. The result of doing nothing is a delayed action bomb that seldom explodes violently enough to blow a bureaucrat out of his seat. Doing the wrong thing can produce an immediate explosion which is generally fatal. The prudent de Laboulaye did nothing.

The American press carried the story of the end of the Treaty of Versailles, accompanied by the remarks of Hitler's Ambassador about the "now assured peace of Europe."

In spite of Luther's geniality and zeal, German-American relations were worsening in 1937. The Spanish Civil War was in full swing. "Unknown" submarines were sinking French and British ships in the Mediterranean. German cruisers had bombarded two open cities in Spain. The tentacles of the Swastika were reaching out and American public opinion was stirring.

The sixty-five-year-old relic of German democracy was recalled. The period during which a transition ambassador could be useful had come to an end. The New Reich recognized that it could no longer masquerade

under the guise of old Germany. An aggressive, two-fisted younger man was sent to represent Hitler in the United States. The man was Hans Dieckhoff, who had known America as a young attaché.

Luther had streamlined German diplomacy. Dieckhoff was to launch a diplomatic blitzkrieg.

The German Embassy had been organized as efficiently as a department store since the resumption of German-American diplomatic relations in 1920.

I learned all about that, first hand, from Dr. Ernst Meyer, economist of the Embassy staff when I met him one day at the Cosmos Club.

It is said of Washington's two well-known clubs that one, the Metropolitan, has all the money, and the other, the Cosmos, all the brains. To get into the Cosmos, proof of a substantial contribution to an intellectual field must be submitted to the Board of Admissions. A favorite Cosmos story is told about Woodrow Wilson, whose sponsors listed as his qualification for membership: "President of the United States." It was returned with a request for further proof of eligibility.

At the luncheon hour at the Cosmos would be found scientists, writers, economists, educators and—Dr. Meyer. I was allowed to slip into the Club on the intellectual coat tails of my father. Whenever I happened to be there I saw Dr. Meyer. I said to him jokingly one day: "You must live here, Doctor! I see you every time I come!"

The Herr Doktor smiled and answered: "Why, this is my beat! You people in the French Embassy all entertain the same little group of Americans—people who say they love La Belle France. We each have a definite sec-

tion of Washington to contact. Mine is the scholastic people and the scientific group in the government. My colleague, Scholz, does younger society, both residential and diplomatic. The army and navy attachés see the service people, of course. You do that also, but the rest of your staff go about as they please. Not so with us! Even our leisure hours are planned. Our luncheon and cocktail companions are picked for us. At our daily conferences with the Ambassador we pool what we have learned and list those whom we have seen. The chief does the coordinating."

Dr. Meyer was shortly afterwards compelled to resign as a disloyal member of the German Corps—tainted with Jewish blood.

The efficient regimentation of the Embassy's staff was in force even when the Wilhelmstrasse had little money to spend. After Hitler came into power the regimentation went on and money began to flow in. To the direction of this well-oiled diplomatic machine, Luther's successor, Hans Dieckhoff, brought imagination and ample funds.

Dieckhoff was born in the Black Forest. His ancestral home lay within five miles of the French frontier. He spoke beautiful French and always professed an understanding of his neighbors and their problems. It was in London, however, that he made his reputation as Diplomatic Ace. The tall, cropped-haired "Schwartzwalder" left the diplomatic service in 1914 to become a lieutenant of cavalry. He re-entered the service after the war and was sent to London in 1924. Frau Dieckhoff, a dark, almost Byzantine beauty was born in Constan-

tinople of German parents. She possessed that boundless vitality which many Germans have and which causes less vigorous people to feel a distinct sense of animal inferiority in their presence.

When the Dieckhoffs landed in England, German diplomats were still social pariahs. It did not take the couple long to map out a plan of action—Hans Dieckhoff made London's exclusive clubs via the golf course. His Frau followed up with brilliant dinners and fancy dress balls. His tact and her beauty and charm eventually reopened London drawing rooms to German diplomacy, doors which had been shut in distaste, rather than slammed in anger, since 1914. The Dieckhoffs laid the foundation of the Cliveden set in England and gained the reputation in the German Foreign Office of being ideal troubleshooters for an English-speaking country.

Soon after his arrival in Washington, Dieckhoff decided that the gingerbread ersatz castle in the boarding-house district of Massachusetts Avenue was no longer a fitting frame for Germany's representatives in Washington. He rented the imposing home of Countess Gladys Vanderbilt Széchenyi (wife of the late Hungarian Minister to the United States) which is almost opposite the British Embassy. The Dieckhoffs had friends in Washington from their attaché days and a period of intensive entertaining began. They scrambled their parties—mixing official, residential and diplomatic Washington at lavish receptions. His Excellency avoided the mistake made by a Rumanian envoy who kept "A" "B" and "C" lists of guests. "A" list contained the names of the chic. "B" list contained the names of the "musts" (necessary from an



official point of view). "C" was composed of people who were neither chic nor official, but sometimes useful. The tale got around and the "B's" and "C's" boycotted the envoy from then on—to his eventual undoing when the story got back to Bucharest.

The only group Dieckhoff entertained as a unit was the Washington press, whom he received at a weekly cocktail party. He made it plain, however, that he was not segregating the newspapermen. The weekly gathering was merely one aspect of his association with the press. He included them individually in his most exclusive dinners. The new German envoy soon became a favorite with the Washington correspondents.

These press cocktails had an animation all their own. The word went around that Dieckhoff was the one original, absolutely frank envoy—no diplomatic shush-shush, no "confidential" compartments—and the newspapermen loved it.

"The sky is the limit," Dieckhoff would say to his guests. "Any question will be answered. Go to it, boys!"

And go to it the "boys" would. No bothersome interviewing, no tiresome prying. The table was laid, abundantly provided. Come and get it! And it wasn't a hoax. Dieckhoff answered the most probing questions with an amazing lack of reticence. The "boys" grew very fond of the big, hard-hitting Black Forester. There would be rough and tumble arguments sometimes. Dieckhoff would hit back vigorously when German policy took a punch. Many of the journalists thought he was being extremely indiscreet and wondered why he didn't get into trouble with Berlin. He actually revealed to one of them

in the spring of 1938 the plan for the partition of Czechoslovakia—with full details. None of them wrote it. No one would have believed it if they had.

Dieckhoff was not the only indiscreet member of the Embassy staff. His second secretary and nephew, Herbert Blankenhorn, would invariably let his hair down after a couple of Scotches and sodas. Blankenhorn would reveal the Fuehrer's plans for the future of Europe, while young French and Polish attachés listened open-mouthed. Blankenhorn spoke quite calmly of the future attack upon Danzig—the plans for Central Europe. He took care, however, to assure the French and British attachés that England and France had nothing to fear. The double-barrelled Nazi propaganda was in full swing, building up the legend of invincibility as far as the little countries were concerned and putting the big boys to sleep.

Dieckhoff's parties in the handsome home on the right end of Massachusetts Avenue became increasingly popular. Countess Széchényi's stately dining room was in full party regalia three or four times each week. The former hosts of Carlton Terrace—the German Embassy in London—were wooing Washington over the dinner table as ardently as they had pursued London.

Dieckhoff did not have to rely on his ambassadorial salary for entertainment expenses. An unlimited special fund from the Propaganda Ministry was at his disposal for the express purpose of wining and dining Washington officialdom.

By the fall of 1938 events were overtaking the German envoy. Both the press and Congress were largely anti-

Nazi. Munich had come and gone. The cries of the persecuted were reaching America. The bierabend time was over. Dieckhoff abandoned wholesale entertaining and concentrated on individuals in key places.

Generals, admirals, members of the Cabinet and the "little cabinet," permanent officials, sat at his table and drank his perfectly cooled Rhine wine. His guests were people in official positions who, as long as we maintained "friendly" relations with the Reich, could not turn down the envoy's invitations. A feature of the Dieckhoff dinners were speckled brook trout imported specially from the Schwarzwald for the German Ambassador's table. Each little fish was grasping its buttered tail in its mouth, looking as if it had jumped from the rod into the frying pan.

Although the majority of his guests were not in sympathy with the Nazi regime, they all fell victims of the personal charm of Hitler's Ambassador. Following his usual tactics, he startled his senatorial and other official guests by his free discussion of controversial subjects; so controversial that they were trying tactfully to avoid them. He was like the owner of the haunted castle who was willing to throw open the mystery chamber and ask "Where is the ghost, please?" Ideological problems seemed to disappear into thin air when he reduced them so convincingly to practical formulae. And some of his American listeners would nod their heads approvingly when Dieckhoff explained to them that all the so-called fanaticism of his chiefs meant nothing but "lebensraum," "coal, wheat, iron and a decent share of the world's goods!"

Though Dieckhoff went full speed ahead with his social schedule he did not allow it to interfere with certain other activities. He was leading a diplomatic double-life. Few who sat at his sparkling dinner table knew of the bustling activities in the dingy old embassy, on the wrong end of Massachusetts Avenue. It had become, under Dieckhoff, a clearing house for Nazi money, propaganda and agents en route to Central and South America. A thriving "export-import" business was carried on there under the cover of diplomatic immunity. Tons of anti-American literature were going in and out. Funds for Nazi agents were being disbursed. It had become the center of a vast network. There have been numerous unreported scandals and many amusing tales about the abuse of diplomatic privilege. A French attaché made a fortune during prohibition days by selling hundreds of cases of priceless whisky and champagne which had come into the United States under diplomatic immunity. The method of transferring these conspicuous and cumbersome cases was to rent a furnished house, stock the cellar with the precious goods, and then immediately sublet house and booze to the highest bidder. Another French attaché created a sensation in his own foreign office when he dispatched the corpse of his deceased pet via the diplomatic valise with instruction to bury the dog in his native land. Valise and pet had to be cremated upon arrival. A Persian envoy augmented his income by smuggling quantities of cocaine into this country via the diplomatic pouch from Teheran.

It is generally left to the good taste and the good sense of the diplomat not to abuse his privileges. When the

head of a mission himself is at fault—and this is very rare—a hint sent direct to his government is sufficient to bring about the culprit's recall and disgrace.

Dieckhoff's case was different. His infractions were ordered by his own government and he remained blandly indifferent to the veiled admonitions of Sumner Welles.

Finally, the State Department in spite of its soft-pedaling instincts, could overlook his left-hand activities no longer. He was warned that if his extracurricular undertakings continued he would be invited to leave the United States. Dieckhoff went on leave to Berlin, where he remains to this day. Officially, however, he still is carried in the State Department's blue book as Germany's ambassador to the United States. Berlin preferred to ease Hitler's envoy out of Washington as gracefully as possible. Frau Dieckhoff remained in town after her husband's departure to cushion the blow. Half a year went by and she had not even begun to pack bales, boxes and trunks. Although she lingered nonchalantly, she was careful to take no step which might indicate a disposition on the part of Berlin to knuckle under in its contention that what went on in the old German Embassy was its own business and not that of the American Government.

As Dieckhoff was still accredited Ambassador, his Frau was entitled to an invitation to the diplomatic reception at the White House, in December, 1938. An invitation from the President of the United States is a command. Frau Dieckhoff requested the State Department not to include her so that she would not be forced to turn down a Presidential invitation. Her excuse for this extraor-

dinary request was that she was "unofficially" in America. Finally Dieckhoff sent for his wife and the Washington diplomatic blitzkrieg was over. The direction of the German Embassy passed definitely into the hands of the next in command, Herr Hans Thomsen, where it has remained to this day.

Dieckhoff's special knowledge of America is not being lost, however. He is now a member of the Politisches Bureau of the Berlin Foreign Office and his hand was recognized in the speech Hitler made in 1939 when he spoke so scathingly and penetratingly of the weaknesses of democracy.

As the excitement over Munich mounted, anti-Nazi sentiment in Washington became more pronounced. The German Embassy knew that it was on trial. From now on, under the able Thomsen, German diplomacy would play a purely defensive role on the social stage, retreating as slowly as possible from the high peak of success when it had sold Hitler as the avenger of Versailles, and the Restorer of Order.

Large receptions became rare after Thomsen stepped into the *chargé*-ship. The special fund for lavish entertaining was discontinued. German money was being spent in more useful fields. The excitement over the invasion of Czechoslovakia had scarcely died down, however, when the Thomsens began to entertain at small discreet dinner parties. Washington is a town which advertises where it eats and with whom more sedulously than any other civilized city in the whole world. Pages of the society columns of the daily papers are taken up with descriptions of dinner parties—who gave them, who went

to them, what was eaten, what the ladies had on. The only omission is the state of digestion of the guests after the party. In spite of this accepted custom of publicizing parties—especially official ones—the German Embassy no longer gave out dates or lists. There were people who were glad to accept invitations from Herr Thomsen and his Frau, but who were just as pleased not to have the fact advertised.

The international picture is presented in Washington in a highly concentrated form in the presence of foreign officials. The actual buildings in which the Representatives live belong to their native lands. The French Ambassador used to say when he walked through his garden around the Embassy: "I am in France."

Feeling about what goes on in the rest of the world naturally registers more violently in Washington than it would in a less seismographic community. As the pretty, Canadian-born wife of Norway's Minister, de Morgenstierne, expressed it: "It's so much worse when you know the people!"

She was speaking of the Danish minister whose country had just been invaded. Norway's turn was four days in the future. After the partition of Poland fewer members of the Administration, unless it was in the line of duty, accepted invitations from the German Embassy.

As shock succeeded shock, even those who were strictly isolationist and who never failed to mention British Imperialism whenever Nazi aggression was brought up, fought shy of Hitler's representatives. The Thomsens gave up the handsome house which Dieckhoff had rented for his social blitzkrieg and entertained in their more

modest home. The old Embassy was now practically dismantled as a residence and was used for office space, a busy, bustling center of direction for consular activities. The Thomsen parties were small and quiet, attended by wealthy dowagers and elderly retired gentlemen who believed that by listening to Hitler's advocates they could keep their sons out of uniform and their income taxes from going up.

But even these small, quiet parties were effective. The Thomsen guests would go from bridge party to bridge party, from hen luncheon to hen luncheon, from cocktail to cocktail, expounding the wisdom of inertia, offering up the carefully pointed out errors of the British as an apology for the crimes of the Nazis.

Blond, suave, Norwegian-born Thomsen had arrived at the Embassy as Counsellor in the fall of 1936. He left Washington briefly to make a trip to Rome in 1938, to take over the arrangements for Hitler's safety when he visited the Italian Capital. Thomsen's love of music, his genuine culture and his good looks made him an attractive member of the diplomatic corps. His position in Washington, however, grew more difficult with each advancing mile of the Nazi legions.

Besides having to swim against the current of events, Thomsen also had the misfortune of beginning his career as Chargé d'Affaires during an incident involving Herr Hitler and Secretary Ickes. He was instructed by his government to make it clear to the State Department that Hitler did not relish the criticisms of the American cabinet officer. When Thomsen went up to the State



Department, he was ushered into the office of Under-secretary Welles.

The urbane, soft-voiced Thomsen can have a very steely look in his eyes at times. Thomsen it was who snapped his firm lips together with the remark, "I believe in drastic and uncompromising solutions," when Nazi banning of the music of Mendelssohn (who had a Semitic ancestor) came into a dinner party discussion.

Thomsen did more than make a routine protest over Mr. Ickes' "unwarranted remarks." He expressed himself very vigorously.

Mr. Welles is also blond and suave. He listened patiently and then said: "*You, you*—dare to come on such an errand! If our Chargé in Berlin protested every time Hitler attacked America and things American, Mr. Kirk would do nothing else than go between the American Embassy in Berlin and the Foreign Office!"

Thomsen pointed out that it was not Ickes' right to talk that the Foreign Office protested—the German Government felt that the State Department should keep the American press from carrying such remarks. To that Mr. Welles answered that the German press expresses anti-American sentiments and that the German press is a *government organ*, while the American press is free.

By the time Thomsen assumed command of the Embassy, both he and his Frau were well known characters in Washington. Thomsen's charming and vivid wife, a Hungarian by birth, has the doll-like features, slanting brown eyes and high coloring of certain Danubian women. She likes bright colors, wears tiny exotic hats

perched on her reddish curls. So animated is Frau Thomsen, so childishly eager in her interest in all that goes on around her, that her friends call her "Bébé" Thomsen.

Bébé became known for her love of animals. When her pet squirrel ran away she would tell the tale in a way that would make your heart melt. When Bébé began to hint that Hitler's excesses revolted her, the town's heart went out in sympathy. But later, when she announced at a dinner party which included the Undersecretary of State, that Germany would not be happy until Hitler was killed, some of the more sophisticated began to raise their eyebrows. And when she wrote a ten-page letter to Mrs. Cordell Hull denouncing Hitler and all his works, even some of Bébé's best friends began to be shaken in their belief that she was "just an amazingly frank woman."

Such an incident was unparalleled in the history of diplomacy. Even in the haphazard French Embassy it would have cost an envoy his official head to have his wife denounce his government. Washington puzzled over the Frau's "indiscretions" for many months. There were two camps—those who saw in her an "agent provocateur" and those who declared she was just an impulsive woman and who can control an impulsive woman? Not even Hitler!

Attachés of the small European legations, in the days when they cherished the neutrality illusion, were in the first camp. They were exceedingly leery of Frau Thomsen and her anti-Nazi outbursts, especially after she told the American-born wife of the Netherlands minister, Mr. Loudon, that all the Nazi Gestapo men in America were

her good friends. Neutral diplomats refused to be inveigled into discussions of Hitler with pretty Bébé Thomsen over a cocktail. As news comes into Washington of what goes on in other capitals, it is becoming known that there have been Frau Thomsens in most German missions abroad. In Mexico a man plays the role of Hitler-doubter, and prophesies the eventual break-up of Germany from within. He was particularly active among his French, British and American colleagues before the invasion of Poland. This phase of diplomatic technique fits in with the propaganda which encourages inaction on the part of countries not yet directly in the Nazi path. It stimulates the hope among people who are advising their governments (those who are supposed to possess "inside information" through their "contacts") that Hitlerism will break up of itself.

A great many Washingtonians who met the Thomsens casually were disarmed by Frau Thomsen's diatribes against the head of the German government and would cite her as living proof that the Nazi regime permits freedom of speech.

Events caught up with the Thomsens. Poland was invaded.

The debate over the repeal of the arms embargo reached crescendo and anti-Nazi feeling ran high in Washington. The German Embassy became uneasy for the safety of its staff. Thomsen asked the State Department whether adequate police protection would be available in case of an anti-Hitler demonstration in front of the embassy. Situated as it was, it was difficult for the staff to know much about the neighbors. Thomsen asked

if it would be possible for the Washington police to make a house-to-house canvass of all residents within the same city block as the Embassy chancery.

The protection was provided, but the canvass was never made. Thomsen dropped the matter when it was pointed out that such an investigation would do more to inflame public opinion against the members of the German Embassy than anything that was being said in the debate on the "Hill."

The role the Thomsens played in Washington became less active officially as time went on.

Nazi diplomacy's retreat from the Washington social scene was in progress, but it was yielding ground as slowly as possible. Hitler's diplomats had the consolation of knowing that each military victory of the Fuehrer's made the tea-cup defeats in Washington less important. The German Chargé was to give a last entertainment before he bowed himself off the social scene, and he succeeded in filling the ballroom of the Mayflower Hotel with residential and diplomatic society, though by this time he was telling all of his remaining contacts that the world would be much better off when the unworkable democracies were organized by Hitler.

The last big entertainment offered by the Nazi diplomat was given in the latter part of March, 1940, just six weeks before the invasion of Holland. When the date for the party was announced speculation was general as to whether anyone would go. The party was for His Royal Highness, the Duke of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, a German duke but a grandson of Queen Victoria and the president of the German Red Cross. When the news

about the Royal Guest of Honor came out, pasteboards began to slip under the semi-boycotted German Embassy door. More cards were left during one week than had been deposited during the previous year and a half. There is a jello-like mass of society everywhere which remains unruffled by great issues and quivers only to the call of the chic. And a Royal Highness, a Duke, a grandson of Queen Victoria, on an "errand of mercy" was decidedly chic. Besides, the president of the German Red Cross had been educated at Eton and had an English title: Duke of Albany! The party was to be given at the Mayflower Hotel and not at the embassy—that seemed to make a difference, also.

The reception was well attended, the buffet sumptuous. Thomsen knew what his guests didn't know, that it would probably be the last party for some time, and it was a good one. The guests crowded around the laden table, ate and drank and laughed and talked and explained to each other in lower tones their reasons for being there.

"After all it *is* for Victoria's grandson! A Red Cross president *is* different! We wouldn't go to the German Embassy, but a party given by an individual (the invitations were issued in the name of Herr and Frau Thomsen) at a hotel—." And so on.

The staff was well pleased with the success of the evening. The Duke would report to Hitler that his diplomats were still in circulation in Washington and that there was no indication of rising temperature in the nerve-center of the nation. The attachés were also highly amused at their sudden popularity.

Herbert Scholz, who by this time was on duty as Con-

sul in Boston, was ordered down to Washington for the occasion. He announced to some of his old friends that it was quite comical that "an insignificant little man with a title," as he described the Duke, could induce Washington to swallow the swastika with its champagne.



### III

## PLEASE PRESENT AT DOOR

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As I HAPPENED to glance up, I was struck by the swarthy Mongolian face, floating in space above the brilliantly lighted scene below.

His Excellency was peering down at the crowd in the drawing room from a balcony on the stair-landing of the old Pullman home—subsequently the Russian Embassy in the U. S. A.

Alexander Antonovich Troyanovsky, first Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary from the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics to the United States, looked completely alien to the scene he was watching. He was dressed in conventional evening clothes, but his dark, Asiatic face, with its slant eyes and high cheek bones rose incongruously above the white butterfly tie. The whole square, sturdy figure would have looked more at home in front of a Yurta than in the red and gold draw-

ing-room of the old Czarist Embassy—now the official home of Stalin in the U. S. A.

I knew a good deal about Troyanovsky but I couldn't guess what he was thinking as he watched his guests so intently. Was he asking himself whether his remarkable success in filling the salons of the Soviet in Washington would fasten his head a little more securely on his shoulders? Was he thinking of similar scenes in pre-Revolutionary Russia, of other red and gold drawing rooms, of other orchid-decked women? Did he see other rows of stiff gold chairs, politely applauding the artist of the day, unmindful of the still distant thunder? Or was he faintly amused at the alacrity with which Washington had accepted the bowl of caviar tendered by the blood-soaked fingers of the Soviet?

Perhaps, as his eyes swept from group to group, spotting high Administration officials, foreign envoys, members of Congress, socially prominent couples, he was congratulating himself upon having accomplished a diplomatic *tour de force*. In a very short time Troyanovsky had broken the social blockade which had been erected in Washington against the arrival of a "Red" ambassador.

The word had gone around, at the news of the appointment of a Soviet envoy, that the Bolshevik would be in, but not of Washington, that his presence would be tolerated only on strictly official occasions. His first interview with Undersecretary of State William Phillips, now American Ambassador to Rome, was a sample of the atmosphere in which Troyanovsky could expect to live. Phillips had a horror of the Reds but being a career



diplomat he was perfectly courteous as the icy phrases of recognition of the *fait accompli* in Russia dropped from his lips.

Afterwards Troyanovsky used to laugh about that interview and about his first contact with the social blockade. The diplomatic cold douche was not new to the Soviet's envoy. He had served for five years in Tokio, also a Red-hating capital, where he had learned the delicate art of conversational ping-pong. When the conversation lagged and the Undersecretary of State filled in the gap with the remark: "You are fortunate in having such a handsome embassy in Washington, Mr. Ambassador," Troyanovsky slammed the ball right back across the net. "It must have been a nice home for a private person like Mrs. Pullman, but it is hardly the setting for the embassy of a great power!"

Troyanovsky, the first Red envoy to Washington, was, like Hitler's first ambassador, Hans Luther, a transition man. Neither of them was completely in sympathy with the regime he was serving and both did amazingly good jobs.

Luther and Troyanovsky were living refutations of the thesis that ambassadors are uniformed messenger boys; that personalities of envoys have ceased to count in an age of easy communications. Luther acted as a brake, in some quarters in Washington, upon full realization of what Hitler's new Germany was about. Troyanovsky confused the minds of many prominent American officials as to the future of liberalism in New Russia. It was not until the Soviet attacked Finland and the German Embassy staff began to appear in a regimented mass at

Soviet receptions that Washington woke up to the fact that the two extremes had met.

Trojanovsky was transferred from Tokio to Washington, where his flair for contacts, his keenness in sizing up people and situations, soon made the Soviet envoy one of the most popular in Washington. No western power has had a representative in the Capital in the last twenty years who understood the American mind as well as the Mongolian-featured Trojanovsky, who looked not only foreign but a little sinister—until he smiled. His smile was utterly beguiling—a childish, almost gleeful, grin, which invariably softened his more tart remarks.

The new ambassador could be very tart. He wasn't taking anything from official or social Washington. When a lady who prided herself upon being frank made a disparaging remark in his presence about the Red Revolution, Trojanovsky shot back with: "Madam, our two countries were born in revolution—the difference between yours and mine is one hundred and fifty years!"

I was among the few in Washington to learn Trojanovsky's background from his own lips. There had been a small luncheon. All the guests had gone except the then Assistant Secretary of State, R. Walton Moore, and myself. A close friendship had developed between Moore and Trojanovsky. It was a less incongruous association than it appeared to be on the surface, since both were liberals, scholars and gentlemen.

We went upstairs to the ambassador's study. There he took from a box a small photograph and showed it to us, with a smile. It was the picture of a young man in the resplendent uniform of an artillery officer under the

Empire. To my inquiring eye he answered: "It's I, many years ago." Then this story followed.

Troyanovsky had joined the Revolutionary movement after the Russo-Japanese war, not because he was in love with the new but because he was thoroughly disgusted with the old. He was the son of a Czarist colonel and his father sent him to the Imperial School of Artillery at Tula. He was a second lieutenant when the Russo-Japanese war broke out and his experiences during that war utterly disgusted him with conditions under the Czarist regime.

He confessed that it was not so much the corruption as the incompetence that revolted him. He saw senior officers in the rear playing poker and raising each other by goblets full of gold coins, because they were burning so fiercely with the gambling fever that they couldn't even stop to count their money. He saw the troops suffering from lack of ammunition, clothing and food, while the officers drank and gambled. The crowning touch came when he heard the captain of his own battery being bawled out for using camouflage! The Commander-in-Chief of the Imperial Army in Siberia, General Linievitch, called him and his officers cowards for "hiding in valleys and behind trees instead of facing the enemy with courage."

All this was too much for Troyanovsky. He resigned his commission at the end of the war and became a member of the revolutionary movement. He was sent to Siberia several times and when the World War broke out in 1914 he was in a political prisoners' camp as a dangerous enemy of the Czar. Lenin's Bolsheviks did not mind his being a revolutionary of the right—a Menchevik.

He fought alongside the liberators of the Russian proletariat and in 1928 was sent to Tokio, where his pink politics and White Russian family connections made him an acceptable ambassador in a country which would not have swallowed a violent Red.

He stayed in Japan until 1933. Moscow had an eye on the color prejudices of Washington when Troyanovsky was sent to the American Capital as the first Ambassador of the Revolution.

The Kremlin could not afford to go wrong in the choice of its first representative. America was the last great power to extend recognition and resumption of diplomatic relations must be tactfully inaugurated by the right envoy. Troyanovsky was the man for the job. It didn't take him long to size up Washington and to map out a plan of campaign. The new envoy was determined not to be a social beggar—not to accept the crumbs of condescension from those embassies and legations which would invite him because they were ordered by their Foreign Office to play a long shot.

It was a foregone conclusion in Washington society that the Bolshevik Ambassador would not presume to entertain, but they did not know their Troyanovsky. Shortly after his arrival he gave a big reception at which he gathered in Congressmen with Socialist leanings, high government officials, diplomats who could not afford to turn him down, a number of long-haired individuals from New York and Chicago and all of the press. News is news—no matter what the color of the ink. The press were there to find out all about the first Red envoy, whose arrival marked a new era in American-Soviet relations.

The party was a gorgeous affair—surpassing anything Troyanovsky's Czarist predecessors had ever offered the élite of Washington. The buffet was a work of art. Crystal punch bowls of large-grained, grey-black Beluga caviar, which had been sent especially from Astrakhan, dotted the table. The serving spoons were silver ladles. There were whole sturgeons and sterlets *en jellée* which had arrived in ice from the Volga River. There were masses of less exotic viands—artistically decorated capons, pheasants, and hams. In the middle of the table was a mountainous Russian cake topped with a sugar scythe and hammer.

A string orchestra was playing behind a screen of palms. Champagne, vodka and whisky buffets were scattered through the reception rooms. Bridge tables had been set out in a quiet place.

This party made quite a noise in Washington. The U.S.A. was in the grip of the great depression. Nothing so lavish had been given in the Capital for many a day. The press carried elaborate accounts of the affair. Stories began to leak out about the new ambassador. He was, it seemed, a "Real Personality."

Washington began to be very curious about the Red Envoy and Troyanovsky chose that moment to close the embassy doors. For six months he played possum—no more entertainments were given. He made it clear that he was not trying to crash the gates of social Washington. He simply wasn't interested. He returned promptly the cards of the first people who called—those who decided that it might be interesting to see the inside of the old Czarist embassy under the new regime, but he sent out no more invitations.

By this time Troyanovsky, a man of great personal charm, had acquired a few friends among the Administration officials and the American journalists whom he met in the course of his diplomatic routine. He invited them to join him in a quiet bridge game at the Embassy. A legend about the Red envoy began to flourish. It became known that he was the son of a Czarist colonel and that his views were no pinker than those of our own drawing-room leftists. Visiting cards in increasing numbers began to deposit themselves on the silver salver of the butler who opened the door of the Embassy.

Anecdotes were being circulated in Washington salons about the recent addition to the corps. Here was something new—an envoy with the kind of brains Americans appreciate. Troyanovsky could “take it” and “give it.” He was quite a change from the classical ambassador who murmured uncompromising nothings in a cultivated voice and who unerringly dosed the cordiality of his smile according to the rank of the recipient.

The story of the meeting between the new Ambassador and the Chief of Protocol when Troyanovsky went to pay his respects to Undersecretary of State Phillips was repeated here and there. Troyanovsky arrived in the waiting-room of the State Department. There he saw two men talking together. One was the ceremonial officer, waiting to escort him, and the other was a journalist.

Troyanovsky took two steps towards the newspaperman, then changed his direction and gave his outstretched hand to the Chief of Protocol.

Some weeks later the newsman asked him: “Mr. Ambassador, how did you know which of us was the Protocol

man?" "Oh," said Troyanovsky, "That was easy. He looked dumber than you did."

Drew Pearson, Washington columnist, cornered Troyanovsky, and, with his most solemn undertaker's assistant expression, proceeded to probe: "Mr. Ambassador, is it true that you have been married three times and that your second consort is now the wife of the head of the Ogpu?"

Troyanovsky was ready for him. "Why, Mr. Pearson, it's amazing how wrong you gentlemen of the press can be. I have been married four times, not three. The head of the Ogpu is an intimate friend of mine. He saw me off at the station when I left Moscow recently and told me that he had already divorced my third wife!"

Washington, due to the presence of foreign missions, has an air of cosmopolitan sophistication, but if you scratch the surface, you soon see the village underneath. A city with little to offer in the field of culture;—no opera house, only one theatre, no ballet—has to divert itself somehow. Gossip is the major pastime and stories about personalities spread with astonishing rapidity. Troyanovsky became the subject of endless stories and much speculation. Curiosity about the new envoy grew. By the time he was ready to give his second big party, he had more than enough visiting cards from which to cull an imposing invitation list. He mailed 1,200 invitations. In the lower, right-hand corner of the cards he sent out for this second event was engraved the legend: "Please present at the door." Troyanovsky was serving warning that gate-crashers would not be welcome in the Soviet Embassy. The Bolshevik Ambassador did not intend to fol-

low the time-honored Washington custom, in vogue with ambassadors and Cabinet wives, of throwing open the doors to all comers on their days "at home."

Washington, in some mysterious manner, is expected to divide itself into sheep and goats. People who have a "right" to pay official calls pay them; those who have no reason to call are supposed to stay home. This system worked out fairly well when Washington was a small town, but it has recently become quite an issue with Cabinet wives as to how long non-invitation at-homes can continue.

There used to be only a few sightseers who would show up on official days to make the tour of the house or embassy, partake of refreshments and go home. When Troyanovsky came to Washington in 1933 the old system still prevailed. Embassies opened their doors on Friday afternoons to any visitors who came.

Troyanovsky was leaving nothing to chance. There were to be no public receptions at the Soviet Embassy and the "Please present at the door" cards were carefully inspected by a triple control at the entrance. Troyanovsky knew that he must be exclusive or have his embassy overrun by a horde of individuals who wanted to sightsee in the newly opened Soviet Embassy. The first Red Ambassador had other things to do than to receive indiscriminately in the elegant salons where Backmeteff used to entertain the guests of the Czar. He chose to be exclusive and the Ogpu men at the door rigidly examined each card and checked the name of the bearer on a list.

Mrs. J. Ham. Lewis, charming, absent-minded wife of the late Senator from Illinois, was stopped at the door.



She had forgotten the open sesame. She protested in vain to the OGPU man. Though her manner would have carried conviction anywhere else in the world, he refused to let her in without the card. I was just ahead of her and I told Troyanovsky, as I went down the receiving line: "They're holding Mrs. J. Ham. up at the door, you'd better do something about it, Mr. Ambassador." He went downstairs, rescued "Gipsy," as she is called, and escorted her into the drawing room.

Influential members of the New Deal took up the Soviet Ambassador, and Washington followed suit. By this time the Capital had accepted the fact that the Roosevelt Administration would be with it for some time and that its appointees would continue to hold the spotlight.

The Capital, accustomed to a harmonious alternating rhythm of Republican and Democratic regimes, in which faces change but customs prevail, didn't know, at first, what to make of the New Deal, and resented it to some extent. There were tales of the horrid earnestness of those first young reformers—of their lack of social polish, their queer costumes and leftist ideas. The story went around the town that a prominent New Dealer had picked up the train of an ambadress, while fumbling for his napkin, and wiped his mouth upon it.

Even Mrs. Roosevelt, whose social background couldn't be questioned—and to some that made it so much the worse—was inviting departmental underlings to the White House, was giving teas for working women in the government bureaus, instead of confining herself to society.

But the Cabinet wives of the New Deal headlined the

society columns just as their predecessors had in more orthodox administrations. Justices were still appointed by the President of the United States. Ambassadors were more anxious to meet the officials of the New Deal than the relics of the old. Washington fell into line and began to listen to the stories of the three little Woodrings with the same interest they had shown in the garden parties of Hoover's Secretary of State, Stimson.

When it became known that Justice Cardozo, Jesse Jones, Nellie Tayloe Ross, Madam Perkins, Senators Barkley, Borah, Vandenberg, Austin and scores of other prominent figures were going to the embassy which was to have been the object of a social blockade, curiosity about the amazing Red Ambassador mounted even higher.

Matrons who had sworn they would never set foot on blood-soaked Soviet soil were seen meekly passing the triple inspection at the door. "If we could swallow the New Deal," one of them remarked acidly, "we can certainly swallow the Bolsheviks." And they did swallow the Bolshevik punch and iced cakes, but not without certain reservations. A number of the ladies refused to trust the coat-checking system of the Soviet Embassy and carried their mink coats over their arms into the drawing-room, to the vast amusement of the Troyanovskys.

The fourth Madame Troyanovsky would stand patiently beside her husband at these receptions. Invariably she had three orchids on her shoulder which looked as if they had been pinned there as a concession to the festivity of the occasion rather than as a compliment to the lady. She would peer shortsightedly at her guests through thick-

lensed glasses. The Ambassador had chosen for his fourth matrimonial adventure a plain woman with a sweet smile and a pleasant, intellectual face. Madame Troyanovsky held numerous degrees from Russian universities and soon made a place for herself, not in the diplomatic salons of Washington, but in small forum groups composed of women specialists in government departments and of the intellectual wives of some of the New Dealers.

The young son of the household was sent to a Quaker school where he took to American ways so eagerly that his father became seriously concerned about the eventual return to Russia.

The Troyanovskys had made a real place for themselves in Washington. By this time it would not have been a surprise to the Capital to see J. P. Morgan himself in the Soviet Embassy. There *was* a mild flurry, however, when Bill Borah, the hermit Senator, was seen looming up at an afternoon reception there, looking as out of place as a lion in a rabbit warren.

It was the well-known practice of the Idaho Senator to leave the going-about entirely to the "little Borah" who enjoyed social life. Borah rarely accepted invitations and never those from ambassadors and ministers. His isolationist principles extended not only to countries but to their representatives and to individual foreigners. In 1924 he came close to a flirtation with foreign minds but withdrew at the last moment. He accepted an invitation to attend the Inter-Parliamentary Union in Stockholm and he intended to go on from Sweden to Geneva to look in on the League of Nations. At the last moment he changed his mind and cancelled his reservations. In talking with

a member of the Foreign Policy Association he explained his sudden reversal. "I didn't want," said the prominent member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, "to meet so many international minds. I knew I would find them interesting and I was afraid I might lose my purely Idahoan point of view."

It was nothing short of amazing to many of Borah's colleagues to watch a friendship develop between the foreigner-shy solon and the Soviet envoy. Many of them later identified Troyanovsky as the "kind friend" to whom Borah attributed some of his inside information on world affairs.

The President called the members of the Foreign Relations Committee to the White House in 1939 to impress upon them the imminence of war in Europe and the importance of lifting the Arms Embargo. It was at this meeting that Borah made his flat statement: "There will be no war in Europe—neither this year or the next." Secretary Hull offered to open the State Department files to the Senator, who answered: "I am not interested in your files. My kind friends give me much more accurate information than any of your agents can furnish to you."

Did Troyanovsky feel there would be no war in Europe or was he obeying orders from Moscow in adopting that line of talk? No one knows. Though he was to return in semi-disgrace to his native land, he enthusiastically sold the New Russia as a major factor in world peace, to important liberals in the U.S.A. The fact that he had in his own staff living reminders of a darker side of the proletarian revolution did not affect his zeal. His Naval Attaché, Paul Oras, former executive officer of the

ice-breaker Krassin, was given the Washington post as a reward for throwing nine White officers into a glowing furnace on shipboard.

The military attaché of the Embassy, Vladimir Burzin, was a carpenter by profession, whose education was of the most rudimentary sort. He was one of the handsomest men I ever saw. Comrade Burzin, six-foot-four of him, ranked as a Lieutenant-General during his stay in Washington. He left Russia with an "elastic rank." It could be stretched to meet any situation. When Nazi Germany's military attaché, Colonel Von Boetticher, jumped to Brigadier-General, Burzin informed the American War Department that he was a Major-General. When Von Boetticher raised the ante to Major-General, Burzin became Lieutenant-General. Von Boetticher raised him once more and became Lieutenant-General. Before Burzin could make himself a Marshal he was recalled to Moscow and the German Military Attaché was left master of the field.

Being the wife of a soldier myself and knowing how many years stretch between one stripe and another, I asked Burzin how he managed to telescope the years between promotions. "Well, you see, it's like this. In the Soviet Union we have no ranks. I am a Staff Officer, Second Grade. Staff Officer, First Grade is tops. I can translate my Second Grade into any rank in your army except full General. You see, everything is so much simpler in the Soviet. We do away with red tape and advance through merit. I was an ordinary carpenter and look at me now, sitting at this lovely table," and he added gallantly, "next to you."

All the foreign military and air attachés used to meet several times a year at luncheon or dinner parties. Each man would bring a contribution from his own cellar. Von Boetticher would contribute fine Rhine wine. My husband would send burgundy and champagne. Vodka from Russia; sake from Japan. The officers would bring their wives, who would compare notes on the best places to market and shop in Washington. Nothing more peaceful could be imagined than these little gatherings of the military representatives of thirty nations. The luncheons would invariably end in speeches and toasts to eternal friendship between nations. I frequently found myself seated next to Burzin who invariably tried to convert me to Communism. When he was due to leave we all felt sad about it. But he assured us that he was happy to go back to Russia. A few months later the news came back that he had been purged.

The dilemma in which the Soviet official abroad finds himself is a serious one. If he succeeds in making himself a part of his new environment in order to form contacts useful to him in the discharge of his duties, he is apt to be labelled "contaminated" when he returns to the U.S.S.R. If he keeps to himself and does not know where to go to get his information at the given moment, he is put on the purge list for "flops."

Trojanovsky sailed warily between Scylla and Char-ybdis. He went on cultivating his friends in Washington, but he took care to return to Moscow every year to report to the Kremlin in person.

The intimate bridge games with American politicians continued. Jesse Jones was a frequent fourth in these

quiet evenings. The elaborate soirees went on. The ladies got over their suspicion of the coat-checking system at the Embassy and would even leave their wraps nonchalantly unchecked upon chairs and sofas. The same hired doorman who opened the massive doors of the British Embassy served Comrade Troyanovsky. In the British House he wore Scottish kilts in the colors of the Lindsay clan. At Soviet parties he was dressed in conventional tails.

The New York decorator who "did over" the old Czarist Embassy before the arrival of Troyanovsky, had been ordered to copy the original color scheme as faithfully as possible. In this simulacrum of the old Imperial establishment, the Red Ambassador's entertainments, now that he had not only been accepted but was actually being sought after, reached a crescendo of brilliance.

Ordinary receptions, with food and drink and conversation as sole diversions, were too tame for Troyanovsky. He brought down outstanding artists from New York to sing and play for his guests. Metropolitan Opera star Martinelli, world-famous violinist Efrem Zimbalist both performed in the Soviet drawing room at fifteen hundred dollars a program—a sum most ambassadors counted on to cover a number of dinners and teas. Troyanovsky preferred wholesale entertaining. Outside of his intimate bridge games, he didn't go in for small parties.

These bridge games never comprised more than two tables—usually there was only one. Troyanovsky knew his players well and knew that no controversial subjects would be injected into the evening. The stakes were high and the players would be intent on their cards. Royal

Johnson, former Representative from South Dakota, subsequently a lawyer-lobbyist in the Capital, was one of the steady players. He remarked in a bantering tone one evening to Troyanovsky: "The Representative of the Proletariat must be well-paid to be able to play for such high stakes!" The host smiled and said: "The Representative of the Proletariat receives no salary. He sends in an itemized expense account every month. If he loses at bridge his account is heavier." "And if he wins?" "Then," answered Troyanovsky dryly, "the Proletariat spends less on its representative."

The Red envoy was leary of the routine diplomatic dinners. Stories were apt to circulate after such parties; what the Siamese Minister had said to the Nipponese Chargé about the Far East, or what the Rumanian Minister had said to the Bulgarian Counsellor, sotto voce, about the Pan-Slav movement in Central Europe. Unless his guests could be absolutely counted upon for discretion, Troyanovsky preferred large entertainments where differences of opinion would be drowned in noise. He was seeking an atmosphere of conviviality—the goodwill born of lovely music, fine champagne, the mingling of perfumes and colors. He was avoiding the scrutiny of prying minds and shying away from after-dinner stories which might get back to Moscow.

And his entertainments were nothing if not convivial. One of his receptions in celebration of the anniversary of the Red Revolution reached a hilarious peak. The more formal elements among the guests went home early. Many of Troyanovsky's male friends stayed on until three o'clock in the morning. Troyanovsky announced



with glee that one hundred cases of champagne and twenty cases of vodka had been consumed and that some of the guests had to be carried home. It was, he declared, "a real Russian party."

Until the summer of 1936, Troyanovsky continued to sail gracefully between Scylla and Charybdis, managing to avoid trouble with his foreign office and to keep in touch with American personalities. But clouds began to gather in the sky. With the arrival of Constantin Oumansky, stormy weather was due for Troyanovsky.

Oumansky was to play in the Red Embassy the same role Herbert Scholz was playing in the Nazi Mission—with the difference that Oumansky completely lacked the polish of the socially attractive Herbert. The newly-appointed Counsellor to the Soviet Embassy was no stranger to Washington. He had accompanied Litvinoff to America in 1933 when the Russian Foreign Minister came to sign the agreement by which the U.S.A. granted recognition to the U.S.S.R. Upon his return to Moscow he served as head of the Press Bureau. His close connection with the Ogpu was a matter of common knowledge in some circles in Washington. When he was sent to join the Soviet staff Troyanovsky's friends began to worry, and it soon became apparent that their fears were justified.

Had Moscow decided that the pink ambassador had played out his role or was the Kremlin really suspicious of the effect of a life of bourgeois freedom and comfort on the son of the Czarist colonel? Troyanovsky himself didn't know whether the date for his execution was set or

whether he was merely on trial. He did know that he had acquired a shadow. Wherever he went, Oumansky went too.

Poor Troyanovsky, after having accomplished a diplomatic miracle in establishing undreamed of political and press contacts in Washington, was having his footsteps dogged like an ordinary criminal. Both he and Luther had in common the experience of being watched by their subordinates, to whom they were nominally entitled to give orders, but upon whom they actually depended for their official and perhaps their physical heads.

Troyanovsky began to look sick and worried. He lost his assurance of manner, the punch he had had in the past. The omnipresent Oumansky was watching his every gesture. The new Counsellor began to have a lot to say about how his chief was running the embassy. The attachés were mingling too much with Americans, decreed the ubiquitous next-in-command. The staff were living in separate households instead of under a communal roof in orthodox Bolshevik style. The ration of so many cubic feet of air for each individual was not being respected by Troyanovsky, who was comfortably spread out in the living quarters of the embassy.

Soon members of the staff who were suspected of being infected with the American view-point were recalled to Moscow. Oumansky began to blue-pencil Troyanovsky's guest list. Many names were scratched off. The Ambassador's appointments were scrutinized and when certain friends or officials called they were told that His Excellency was too busy to receive them. Would they confer with the Counsellor instead?

A one-man wall was being built around the Soviet Ambassador. Even the prestige of the newly appointed German Ambassador, Herr Dieckhoff was not sufficient to break through it. A new ambassador to the U.S.A. calls on other envoys of ambassadorial rank who are already established in the Capital. Ambassadors rank not according to the size of the country they represent but according to the length of service in Washington. Dieckhoff made the rounds of the other embassies, having a friendly little chat with each of his confrères. When he arrived at the Soviet Embassy he was ushered into Troyanovsky's study. He had hardly seated himself when the door opened and the small, blond, sharp-featured face of Constantin Oumansky peered into the room. Without a word the Counsellor entered and seated himself in a comfortable chair. A pall descended over the room and the conversation lagged.

Within the customary period of five days, Troyanovsky made an appointment to return the call. Dieckhoff was watching for his arrival from behind the curtains of the German Embassy drawing room. When he saw the inevitable shadow following the Russian Ambassador, he went to the stair landing and greeted them both as they came up. Then, turning to Meyer, the usher, who had escorted the two men up the stairs, he said: "Will you please show Mr. Oumansky into the room of Dr. Thomsen?" Turning his back on the Soviet counsellor, Dieckhoff took Troyanovsky into his private study and closed the door.

Was Dieckhoff merely upholding the *esprit de corps* of ambassadors or did the huge Swabian, a man of consider-

able culture, resent the crude methods of the Ogpu? At any rate, he unhesitatingly put Constantin Oumansky in his place.

Trojanovsky became more and more aloof and difficult of access. Those few of his friends who managed to see him at long intervals found him either apathetic or nervous. One of his former bridge companions ran into him one day in the street. Trojanovsky was miraculously alone, but he hurried on with nothing more than a nod of the head. The newsman ran after him and exclaimed: "Mr. Ambassador, it's a long time since we have had a chat. Can't we lunch together soon?" Trojanovsky made an appointment for lunch at a restaurant on the fish wharves. He picked out a tiny place patronized by people who are willing to sidle through piles of fruit, vegetables, and shining fish heaped in the streets of the wholesale market district, in order to enjoy seafood straight from the water.

Even in this inaccessible place where there was practically no chance of seeing a familiar face, Trojanovsky was nervous and ill at ease. His companion almost regretted the impulse that had made him chase the ambassador.

Trojanovsky's friends, who had a high opinion of his skill and diplomacy, kept hoping that he would eventually get rid of his shadow.

*L'Affaire Romm* intervened and Trojanovsky's goose was cooked. Vladimir Romm was the Washington correspondent of *Izvestia*, best known Moscow newspaper. He was a personal friend of Trojanovsky and, like his ambassador, enjoyed extremely cordial relations with the

Washington press. Romm was recalled to Moscow in 1937 during the general purge, and news leaked back to Washington that he was being indicted for high treason by the Ogpu. He was accused of having been the link between the Trotskyists in Europe and Leon Trotsky in Mexico. When his name was published on the purge list his newspaper confrères in Washington were very much upset.

A delegation from the National Press Club went to call on Troyanovsky and, in the name of friendship, asked him to intervene in Romm's favor. Troyanovsky was on the spot. Romm was his personal friend and a friend of the newspapermen. If he intervened he would probably be suspected of implication in the Trotsky affair. If he refused to lift his hand for his friend, the Washington reporters whose friendship he valued, would brand him as a selfish coward.

He cut the Gordian knot by transmitting to Moscow, without comment, the verbatim request of the American newsmen. Oumansky, however, did not intend to let his chief get by with a graceful solution. He suspected that Troyanovsky had tried to save his friend's neck by suggesting the plea and then presenting it to Moscow as an impersonal document. Oumansky's report followed close on the heels of the request for mercy for Romm. Troyanovsky was informed by Moscow that he could return to Russia for a vacation.

The vacation went on for months and months. It looked as if it might be permanent.

One fine day, however, he appeared again in Washington—a thinner, soberer, much chastened Troyanovsky. Some of his Washington friends had gotten wind of the

fact that the U.S.S.R. wanted to build two battleships in American yards for the Russian Navy. They managed to convey the hint to Soviet officials, through an American stationed in Moscow, that Troyanovsky's purge would not help the Soviet in any dealings with Washington. The Ambassador was returned to the United States with instructions to put the ship deal over. It fell through and with it went Troyanovsky.

Today the first envoy of the Red Republic is in Moscow where he has been pigeonholed in one of the many obscure government departments. He no longer has any contacts with the outside world and, through a friend, has asked all diplomats who knew him in the past to take no notice of him now. Once in a while some member of the staff of the American Embassy sees him scurrying along the streets. In order to save him embarrassment, no salutations are exchanged. Where and how he lives, none of his old friends know. On very rare occasions, until a year ago, when some important American was entertained by the foreign office, Troyanovsky was given back his uniform for an evening—London tails and white tie—and was exhibited to the guest of honor.

He is still alive, probably because a diplomat in the service of the Soviet who has a bourgeois background, a sense of the subtleties of life and a wide culture is too rare a bird to destroy. As the wheel of world revolution turns, he might be needed again some day, somewhere.

Into the Ambassador's empty shoes stepped Constantin Oumansky, who had already decided that they would fit, unless they proved too small. He became

Chargé d'Affaires. Oumansky's lack of a sense of human values blinded him to the fact that it was Antonovitch Troyanovsky and not the Envoy Extraordinary and Ambassador Plenipotentiary of the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics who was a big shot in Washington. He was very much surprised to discover that a blockade had been erected against him which he would not crash as easily as his evicted chief had crashed the social blockade.

Oumansky got the first cold shoulder from his own profession—the members of the National Press Club in Washington. The frigidity of the newspapermen after Troyanovsky's departure was the first sign that the former head of the Press Bureau in Moscow had been a little too clever.

For more than a year after Troyanovsky's departure the word "absent" was marked against his name on the diplomatic list. He was still, nominally, ambassador to the U.S.A. Then Oumansky was made envoy in name, as well as in fact, and Washington acquired its "baby ambassador"—the youngest ever to be accredited to the Capital.

Oumansky's few attempts at entertaining during his chargéship were complete frosts. Gone were the Senators and Representatives, the department officials of other days. At his first reception—"In Celebration of the Twenty-second Anniversary of the Great October Revolution," the cards read—only a few diplomats with wry faces and certain officials of the State Department entered the salons of the Soviet Embassy. The rest of the guests were a motley crew, impossible to classify. They looked as if Oumansky had fished them off a Hollywood lot, where they had been waiting to play a mob scene.

They all had one thing in common—they were obviously hungry.

A few weeks before the date set for the next big reception Oumansky sent out invitations to a private showing of a film glorifying the Red Army. The army of the Soviet marched endlessly across the silver screen, accompanied by its tanks and planes. At about the same time a large picture of Troyanovsky appeared in a Washington paper with the legend beneath: "He is alive and well."

But neither the war might of the Soviet, as depicted on the screen, nor the reassuring picture of Troyanovsky drew Washington again to the drawing-rooms of the Soviet. Oumansky's parties, from now on, would include only those who had to go. By March, 1939, the German Embassy staff would be seen there en masse, Chargé d'Affaires Thomsen flanked by his Naval and Military Attachés and secretaries. A new and more polite way of referring to the Soviet was in order for German diplomats. Instead of calling the U.S.S.R. "Sovietrussland," with the accent on Communism, Russia was now elevated in German diplomatic conversation to "Ratebund" or "League of Bunds."

Other embassies and legations would designate one attaché to represent them at Oumansky's parties. The poor little Baltic States would be there looking green around the gills and choking on the champagne, but smiling bravely. Turkey and China would be optimistically present.

Oumansky kept the embassy just as it had been during the tenancy of the Czars, as far as the reception rooms were concerned, but he filled the living quarters with the



attachés who had to lead, from now on, an orthodox communal existence. Though the furniture and the draperies were the same, the whole place took on a vulgar air, difficult to analyze, but all-pervasive. Even the waiters shoved food at the guests and looked as if they were condescending at that.

Oumansky had Troyanovsky's shoes, but he was not filling them. He stopped trying, and social functions at the Red Embassy grew rare. After the City of Flint incident, Oumansky had few opportunities to put on his impeccably cut tails.

Soviet diplomats are among the most faultlessly garbed of any service. After the revolution, when enough countries had recognized the Soviet to make a diplomatic service necessary, there was a great deal of discussion as to what would be "Full Dress" for Soviet envoys. Chicherin, first Foreign Minister of the Revolution, called in artists who used to design costumes for the Russian ballet and had them create a glorified peasant costume, boots, shako and all. After one look at the sketch, the future diplomats of the U.S.S.R. balked and went on balking. Not even the threat of execution could prevail upon them to run the risk of making themselves ridiculous. It was decided that Soviet diplomats would wear formal evening clothes *en poste* abroad and that they must be made at Pools, the court tailor in London.

H. E. would still have occasion to wear his beautiful tails at the performances of the Washington symphony, provided he could be certain that no music by a White composer would be played. When asked to subscribe to a season box, as were the other envoys in Washington, he

answered: "I will, provided that I am not expected to be present or to pay for any performance at which the music of an Anti-Bolshevik composer is played." The notes of Rachmaninoff, Stravinsky or Scriabine are not for the red ears of the Soviet envoy.

The State Department, of course, took no part in the blockade of Oumansky—and he was a frequent visitor there. He usually had a sheaf of complaints to register: that the American press was unsympathetic; that he was not treated with proper distinction in Washington, and so on. Ever since Oumansky's arrival at the Embassy, Russo-American relations had become a snarled affair. It was impossible to say whether Moscow ordered Oumansky to confuse Washington or whether he was confusing Washington in order to confuse Moscow, and thus keep Russo-American relations a complete mystery, to which only he had the key.

Nothing that was agreed upon between the representative of the U.S.S.R. and the State Department ever stayed settled. A minor incident, typical of many others, concerned the privileges of American diplomats in Moscow. Russian attachés, like all the others in Washington, are tax exempt and have free automobile tags and many other advantages.

Moscow refused to grant the same exemptions to American diplomats in Russia. After much conversation they were finally given and the matter seemed settled. But the next year Moscow again brought up the question, ignored the previous agreement, and argued the matter all over again.

Russia and Germany celebrated their incestuous mar-

riage at the feast of Poland and the American ship, *City of Flint*, was detained in the port of Murmansk. This time the State Department had a complaint to make to Mr. Oumansky. He was asked to call on the Undersecretary of State. Mr. Welles wanted to ask some questions about the detention of the American ship and the cavalier treatment of the American Ambassador—Steinhardt—by the Russian Foreign Office. Steinhardt had been kept cooling his heels for three hours in an anteroom when he went for information. He was finally received by an official who gave him no satisfaction. He was even refused permission to go to Murmansk to investigate.

Undersecretary Welles invited the Muscovite ambassador to explain this wholly unexpected incident. Oumansky was all ready:

Q. "Why was American Ambassador Steinhardt not allowed to go to Murmansk to talk to the captain of the *City of Flint*?"

A. "There were no railroad accommodations worthy of the rank of Ambassador."

Q. "Why was not one of Ambassador Steinhardt's attachés allowed to go?"

A. "There was no attaché who could speak Russian."

Q. "Why was Ambassador Steinhardt not allowed to talk over the telephone to the captain of the *City of Flint*?"

A. "Unfortunately telephonic communications between Moscow and Murmansk broke down just when Ambassador Steinhardt tried to communicate."

Undersecretary of State Welles' last remark was not a question. He said: "Good day, Mr. Ambassador."

Thereafter, Oumansky's appearances at the State Department grew less frequent. He resented having been received by the Undersecretary of State rather than by Secretary Hull and complained to an official that it was a lack of courtesy to be received by "only Mr. Welles." On his last visit to Loy Henderson, Chief of the Eastern European Division, just before the outbreak of the Russo-German war, Oumansky saw the Undersecretary of State looming up in the corridor ahead of him. The Red envoy dashed around a corner to avoid bumping into "only Mr. Welles."

Cars no longer thread into the driveway of the former Pullman mansion to deposit the names of their owners with the doorman. The salons are no longer lighted up in the evenings.

There is a room on the top floor of the Embassy which is supposed to be a copy of the Cheka Room in Moscow where the inner circle of the OGPU meets. It is furnished with a long council table and beautifully carved and painted chairs and chests. There is an odd Russian high-boy, decorated with scenes from peasant life at one end of the room. The room was said to have been installed in the Embassy for the more secret councils of Stalin's representatives. Before Troyanovsky acquired his shadow and withdrew from Washington life he used to show the "Cheka room" to his guests and laugh at its sinister reputation.

It is the only room in which a light now burns.

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## IV

# GALLIVANTING JOAN OF ARC

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IN WASHINGTON'S Rock Creek Park, just off a popular driveway, there is a marble bench. Upon it are engraved the words: "Jusserand—personal tribute of esteem and affection."

Jules Jusserand's two decades of diplomatic representation, during which he was ably seconded by his American-born wife, earned him a special place in Washington, and a memorial in the Capital's loveliest park. His twenty years of service also set the pattern for the ideal French envoy to the United States—a pattern the French Foreign Office never quite forgot. Jusserand's erudition, social gifts and distinction became synonymous with the title "Son Excellence, l'Ambassadeur de France." His two post-war successors, Daeschner and Berenger, came and went without leaving an imprint on the Capital. Each one struggled briefly to settle the War Debts and to fill Jusserand's shoes. Paul Claudel, his third successor, stayed

five years and is remembered by Washington as the ambassador who entered the White House in shirtsleeves and suspenders.

Claudél never attempted to measure up to Monsieur Jusserand's elegant shadow. He was careless, absent-minded, even sloppy. From the moment he arrived until he left, the individualistic poet-ambassador was himself, a fact which eventually served to hang him in his Foreign Office. The Quai d'Orsay clung to the idea that a French representative to Washington must be a lion of society. Claudél was far from that—he soon gained the reputation of being a social flop. Though his very lack of diplomatic circumlocution and his peasant common sense were much appreciated by certain American officials, his absent-minded brusqueness was his undoing in the end.

Following the time-honored tradition of French bureaucracy, Claudél's Counsellor of Embassy, now Vichy's Ambassador to Ankara, prepared his own niche in the hierarchy of the Diplomatic Corps by stabbing his chief in the back. It's an old technique among French bureaucrats—the more chiefs a subordinate succeeds in burying the more essential his own services become. Claudél's peculiarities were faithfully reported to Paris by his Counsellor.

The Quai d'Orsay, overestimating the importance of "le monde" in the Washington of 1933, a far cry from Jusserand's Washington, recalled one of France's ablest diplomats just at a time when his gifts would have been valuable to his country. Counsellor Henry's diplomatic sabotage of his own chief was helped along by some elements in the Paris Foreign Office. It was a secret known

to all of us that Claudel did not particularly rate with the Quai d'Orsay. The prematurely obese French envoy was one of the most delicate poets modern France had produced. His preoccupation with the field of literature, his poetic avocation, were not held against him. Many French diplomats devoted their spare time to letters. Alexis Leger, the former Undersecretary of State, now a refugee working in the Library of Congress in Washington, is one of France's distinguished writers. Jean Giraudoux, another career man, who was Minister of Propaganda during the war, is better known for his "Amphitryon 38" than for his successes in the field of international relations. The reactionary career group which dominated the French Foreign Office could hardly hold against Claudel the fact that he had written the religious play of the century: "L'Annonce faite a Marie." Since the time of François Ier it had been fashionable to Patronize the Arts.

No one begrudged Claudel's preoccupation with the Muse, but his appointment to the Washington Embassy met stubborn resistance. The permanent officials of the Quai looked down on him because he had come into "the Career" from the lowly consular service and was not a member of the inner clique. There were no objections when he was made ambassador to Tokio. Many thousands of kilometers separated Japan from the continent of Europe, and few Frenchmen cared to serve in that far-off country. But Washington was different. While not a diplomatic plum, the hitherto little-known Capital of the United States had become a more acceptable post since the World War. It had the reputation of being ab-

normally hot, expensive, and lacking in diversion, but it was still one of the possible places in which to exist outside of France. The comfortable French Line boats plied frequently between Le Havre and New York.

The reactionary group which dominated the Quai d'Orsay, regardless of what political faction was in power, opposed Claudel's appointment to a major post on general principles. But since it had no candidate really desirous of crossing the Atlantic Ocean and settling in Mrs. John B. Henderson's small house, he got the job. The former consul was good enough for the U.S.A. in the year 1928.

The war was over; the League of Nations seemed to be comfortably in the saddle; the War Debts were still a sore point with the French Government, it was true, but Paris had come to realize through the successive failures of Daeschner and Berenger, that short of repudiation, nothing much could be done about them. The Foreign Office decided that America's relations with her former war ally had reached a static point. Claudel's first reports to Paris were sometimes read for their stylistic qualities, but nobody paid any attention to their contents.

When he arrived in the capital and drove from Union Station to his official residence, he wondered how he would cram his large family into the small home France was renting for her envoys. The residences of French ambassadors in European capitals were palatial. Though Claudel knew that the Washington residence was far from adequate, he was unprepared for what he found. Mrs. Henderson's private home, now a boarding-house, was a far cry from the Palazzo Farnese which housed the



French ambassadors to Rome. France was to acquire a sumptuous residence in the United States just a short while before the Swastika joined the tricolor on the embassy flagpole.

I recognized Claudel the moment I saw him. He had just stepped out of a Zola novel. His hat was a trifle too small; his clothes a little too tight; his trousers inches too short—for the American eye. He kept his small change in a black leather purse with a clasp that bit together. In appearance he was the typical French bourgeois—nor did it end there. Homelife was to him as water is to a duck. He was only happy when surrounded by his wife and numerous children. In the evening, his sense of duty would impel him half-heartedly to knot a white tie around his neck and sent him out to sacrifice himself for La République—but the noon-day meal was consecrated to the family.

A blue ribbon chef is as essential to a French Embassy abroad as the secret code books. Claudel's white-capped artist could prepare the most elaborate *plats*, but *Choucroute à l'alsacienne* was frequently served at the family table. It consisted of oversized frankfurters and slices of ham reposing on a mound of sauerkraut, the whole bathed in pork-fat. When this "people's dish" was indicated as the *pièce de résistance* on the menu embossed with the French coat of arms, the Ambassador's eyes would shine. The beloved *Choucroute* would be solemnly presented by a liveried butler in a magnificent Louis XVI silver dish. Claudel would tuck the sheet-like French napkin under his chin and eat in absent-minded silence, dis-

tributing an occasional *oui* or *non* to one of his children.

An ambassador has a two-fold role to play. From the chancery he keeps his government informed of trends and developments which may affect his country. In the embassy salon he lays the foundation for the friendships and sympathies which he hopes will contribute to more effective work in the chancery. In a European capital, a French envoy had no trouble formulating a plan of action. Business, government, the subsidized press, high society, the leaders of public opinion, were all concentrated in one place. A tactful man could soon learn where the various wires led and could make shrewd guesses about future developments. But Washington, in 1928, was different—it was not America in the sense that Paris was France. Claudel realized very quickly that he would learn little in Washington about the vast contradictions that made up the riddle of the United States. The society which flocked to the French Embassy to leave cards on the new envoy was not composed of people who had business of one kind or another with the representative of the French Republic. The callers were mostly idle women who had settled in Washington, and who had taken over the Diplomatic Corps, with its ranks, medals and titles, because its members were colorful additions to their receptions and dinners. The Number One diplomatic guest of honor was, of course, the British Ambassador. Second-in-line was the Ambassador from France.

The new French envoy was frankly bored by the dowager dinners which the ladies who had spent a season at Cannes felt obliged to offer him. When they failed in their efforts to acquire Exhibit A—His Britannic Majesty's

Representative—they picked the next best diplomatic bet—Son Excellence. France was no longer a kingdom, it was true, but the nobility still existed and her ambassadors represented the ghosts of the kings as well as the Seal of the Republic.

Claudel soon eliminated the purely social side of Washington life. He would turn his deaf ear to his more loquacious dinner partners and he quickly became very unpopular with the dowagers who loved “la Belle France” and who just had to pour out their hearts to the French Ambassador.

He bore with better grace the inescapable dinner parties composed of his colleagues of the Corps and of American officialdom. A redeeming feature of these evenings is that the signal for departure is given by the honor guest at exactly ten forty-five. Less agreeable is the fact that ranks are meticulously paired off, and an envoy may find himself next to the same lady more than once during a season. When this happened to Claudel, his deaf ear stood him in good stead. He would look amiably attentive and would contribute an encouraging yes or no to the conversation, while he savored his meal—lost in his own thoughts. When a South American envoy who was not blessed with a deaf ear found himself next to the same lady for the ninth time in one winter, he considered cabling his government to recall him. At the end of the second dinner he knew his partner’s range by heart; he also knew that short of death or removal from the Washington scene nothing could limit the number of times he might be seated next to her in the future.

Social babble irritated the intellectual French Am-

bassador. He preferred to associate with technicians, industrialists and engineers: his poet's mind was occupied with the rhythm of the wheels of America. Claudel never refused invitations to gatherings of technicians or educators; he never turned down an opportunity to address a college or a university. He was handicapped by his poor command of English, but when his speeches were put into print they reflected the envoy's grasp of the vital forces of America. He realized the American potential in World History and was dismayed to discover, on his travels, that a large number of German exchange professors were lecturing on modern European history in American educational institutions.

The erudite Ambassador knew German literature thoroughly. He had friends among the outstanding minds of Germany. One of his plays, which had been turned down as too heavy for the French theatre, had been produced in Berlin. He did not underestimate the importance of the intellectual campaign the Germans were waging in American colleges. He warned Paris: "These young students are the writers, legislators and diplomats of the future." When he urged his Foreign Office to send French intellectuals to America to influence its developing minds, his reports were labeled poetic outbursts and he was curtly informed that there were no funds available for such purposes.

The bureaucracy of the Quai d'Orsay was convinced that French logic needed no expounding—that France's culture would spread through a magic of its own.

Like a man of the country-side who smells bad weather ahead, Claudel scented the winds which would bring evil

to his land. German propaganda against the Treaty of Versailles was in full swing, and he saw the great potential danger to his country. Impoverished Germany under the Weimar Republic somehow found money to send men of letters to America to lecture, to write, to wipe the slate of history clean for the Fatherland.

Claudél, poet and playwright, understanding the power of the word and the idea, was concerned but impotent. The ambassador's imagination and peasant common-sense would have served his country well if his reports had not fluttered unheeded into a file.

Claudél used to discuss with me some of the barriers to Franco-American understanding. I still remember the argument with the rotund, church-going *père de famille* about the effect on the American tourist of French risqué displays.

In the lush years between 1924 and 1929, Americans were going to Paris in droves to change their high dollars into wine, clothes, perfumes, and evenings in Paris. The rich foods gave some of them indigestion, and certain aspects of Paris night life left an unpleasant taste, once curiosity had been satisfied. Many of my returning friends would talk to me severely about the immoral French. Claudél opened his dreamy eyes wide when I told him that these American dollars spent in *boîtes de nuit* would cost the French dearly someday. The ambassador gave the typical French answer to an expression of American puritanism. He shrugged his shoulders: "If your countrymen prefer the painted ladies of the *Rat Mort* to the stained glass of Sainte-Chapelle, whose fault is that?"

Among outstanding Americans who got an unforgettable shock instead of a mild titillation from a trip to Paris were the Senator from Montana and Mrs. Burton K. Wheeler. Like Claudel, the Senator was a church-going family man. The Wheelers were taken by friends to see the sights of Paris, one of which was the inevitable *Folies Bergère*. Lulu Wheeler was so horrified by some of the *Folies* that she burst into tears and pulled her husband towards the exit, declaring that France was no place for any decent American.

While the absent-minded poet-ambassador sprang from the soil and showed it, his sleek, beautifully-finished wife was a product of generations of the well-to-do bourgeoisie. She was a daughter of a famous Lyons architect.

Marie Claudel was perfectly cast for the role of Ambassadress. She had that beauty, characteristic of some Frenchwomen, which defies analysis. It was a strictly personal formula. Though we all knew that Worth of Paris had done his share, her chic appeared to be completely unpremeditated. It seemed to consist of the way she draped her furs around her shoulders, or the color of the flower she pinned on her dress at the last minute. At the age of fifty she drew eyes away from younger and more carefully lovely women. In Japan she had studied flower arrangement and interior decorating and she set to work to make the old embassy less repelling in its small, stiff formality. Low coffee tables were imported from China, the peeling gold chairs of the salon were painted a soft color, comfortable chairs were added and the back-

breaking drawing-room became more livable. Madame Claudel managed to persuade the Foreign Office to provide exquisite French table linens for Embassy parties, and her table arrangements were worth noticing.

Arriving some months after M. Claudel, she soon became one of the chic hostesses of the town and for her sake local society eventually forgave the Ambassador his indifference, and ended by benevolently classifying it as a peculiarity of the poetic temperament.

Claudel became more, rather than less, aloof after his wife joined him in the Embassy. He ceased even a half-hearted attempt to be a part of Washington social life. In spite of his abstraction, he always noticed food when he was compelled to dine out. During a particularly bad meal in a Washington home, a salad decorated with a maraschino cherry was set before the Ambassador. "Ah!" he murmured, "this is the cherry of apology!" He couldn't understand the American custom of putting sugar in vinegar and oil on fruit—fruit salad was his pet abomination and his description of mayonnaise on pineapple and grapefruit and pear is too lurid for print.

Claudel's absent-mindedness, born of absorption in his own peculiar genius, was real. When Madame Claudel was present he relied blindly upon her to remind him of the smallest practical details of existence. In her absence minor tragedies would occur.

At the diplomatic reception in 1930, he found himself without his Ambassadors, who was in France. Had she been in Washington, His Excellency would never have entered the White House in shirt-sleeves and suspenders.

On his way to the reception, Claudel, who had not

donned his ceremonial gold-embroidered coat for more than a year, discovered that he had expanded while the coat had remained static. He took it off in the privacy of his limousine and with a sigh of relief wrapped himself in his voluminous cloak. He forgot the jacket when he got out of the car, and by the time a startled attaché saw him in the cloak room in shirt sleeves, it was too late. William, the British chauffeur, had gone to see his preferred who lived at an unknown address. The flustered attaché got in touch with the Chief of Protocol who delegated a White House aide to call police headquarters; police headquarters dispatched ten scout cars all over town to look for the missing gold braid.

The disturbed Chief of Protocol informed President Hoover that the reception might have to be delayed for a while because the French Ambassador, second in line, was not presentable. The President, upon hearing the details, growled: "I don't care *what* he has lost. We are going ahead!"

We waited anxiously below with the Ambassador until an enterprising policeman brought in the missing garment. Then we followed him upstairs where we slipped in near the end of the line just behind the Minister from Haiti.

When President Hoover conceived his moratorium to save the German economic structure from collapse, the German and the British envoys were informed of the scheme. The French Ambassador heard nothing about it until the day before it was made public.

Claudé was greatly alarmed—he regarded the plan as



the end of French security. It took weeks of moral pressure from the American government and the press to bring a hesitating Paris into line. But France agreed too late to save Germany and too late to make a handsome gesture.

Claudel invited the Secretary of the Treasury, Ogden Mills, and other high officials to the Embassy for a glass of champagne in celebration of the delayed accord. His Excellency, as he drank to a better world, said in French: "Gentlemen, let us drink to the crisis which has just been avoided and to the catastrophe which is sure to follow!"

Claudel was convinced that a Germany released from her obligations to war-devastated France would set about building a new military machine. He was concerned about the anti-French tone of the American newspapers, which had been activated by the reluctance of the French Government to agree to Hoover's plan. He foresaw the time when the anti-French feeling would grow stronger. The French people, he said, would be unwilling to continue paying their debt to America if the money due from the Reich were not forthcoming.

"From the legal point of view the right hand pocket and the left hand pocket have no connection," he told me one evening, as he gloomily surveyed the future. "But from a practical point of view, the connection is intimate. They belong to the same pair of trousers!"

I asked him why he did not explain all that to the American press and thus prepare public opinion in the United States for the inevitable repudiation of the debt. He could not do it. A French ambassador who sounded off without express authority from his Foreign Office risked

his official neck. And the Foreign Office was not meeting situations before they arose.

Six days after Franklin D. Roosevelt won his election in 1932, Claudel packed his striped trousers and cut-away and hurried to see the President-elect at his gubernatorial mansion in Albany. The Ambassador returned to Washington much impressed by the open-mindedness of the future head of the American government. He informed Paris that Roosevelt had a liberal mind and that he took a statesman's view of international problems.

He ventured to forecast that under the leadership of this unusual politician, sensational changes might occur in this country "so well, yet so little known" abroad.

This daring prophecy made the conservative gentlemen of the Quai d'Orsay label his whole report on Roosevelt as another product of a too vivid imagination. It helped those who were plotting against him to silence the friends who were protesting against his removal from Washington.

Counsellor Jules Henry was one of the few French diplomats ever to grasp the full possibility of American publicity methods. He had cultivated a number of newspapermen and, from time to time, would slip them some intimate stories about Claudel's social ineptitude and faux pas. Jules took good care to see that clippings of these amusing human-interest tales about his chief reached the proper persons in the Quai.

After Roosevelt's election, Henry intimated to the Foreign Office that the embarrassing absent-mindedness of his chief would make it difficult for him to continue in

Washington. He reported confidentially that the new President, a scion of the American aristocracy, would unquestionably welcome a more polished representative from France. Claudel was doomed. A few weeks after the Inauguration, he was unceremoniously removed from Washington and sent to Brussels, a beginner's post. A man with six traceable ancestors and a particule was selected to represent France during the regime of the "new conservative President!"

As soon as it became known in Paris inner circles that Claudel was being terminated by his Counsellor, Andre de Laboulaye staked his claim to the Washington Ambassadorship. De Laboulaye had served in Washington as a young attaché and did not share his colleagues' horror of crossing the ocean. Nor did he believe the myth that the ambassadorial salary of \$50,000 was insufficient to cover entertainment expenses in a city like Washington. He went tooth and nail after the post.

He had been in the Embassy when Franklin Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary of the Navy. At that time he called Roosevelt "Franklin" and Roosevelt called him "André." He had still another connection with the United States. His grandfather had presented the Statue of Liberty to America. The Foreign Office became convinced that a man who had called the new President by his first name in 1916 and whose ancestor had made the official presentation of the symbolic gift from the French Republic, was unquestionably an expert on American affairs. De Laboulaye was made Ambassador to the United States and the Quai d'Orsay relaxed in happy anticipation of a

new era in Franco-American relations. The new French Ambassador would have the valuable personal touch in his dealings with the White House. . . .

The de Laboulayes took their children out of school, packed their trunks and proceeded post haste to the American capital. They made quite a caravan as they arrived in Union Station and were greeted by the assembled staff. Monsieur, Madame, their four children, and mountains of luggage came piling out of the train. M. de Laboulaye was a handsome man with small distinguished features and a neat moustache. Madame de Laboulaye, a plumpish, grey-haired woman, had a motherly smile and an affable manner. They looked like the pleasantest couple in the world.

They drove straight to the little old Embassy on 16th Street, which Madame Claudel had left in running condition for her successor—dinner was ready for them the evening they arrived. The next morning Madame de Laboulaye had not yet taken the curl papers out of her hair or started to supervise the unpacking of her trunks, when the doorbell rang. A somewhat flustered butler hurried up the stairs and told her personal maid: "Inform Madame l'Ambassadrice that Madame Roosevelt is downstairs!" The new Ambassador's wife slipped into a dress and went down to meet her unexpected guest. The two women embraced, chatted, and reviewed their lives and family events during the years which had elapsed since their last meeting.

In the evening, the main topic at the dinner table, to which some members of the staff had been invited, was the visit of the wife of the President of the United States.

M. de Laboulaye, gleefully rubbing his hands, commented on the unprecedented honor and upon the wisdom of the Quai d'Orsay in dispatching the de Laboulayes to Washington. The members of the staff nodded approvingly as they surreptitiously took stock of the man who was to guide French policy in the United States during the next years. No one was prepared for the bombshell which the new Ambassadors proceeded to launch in the midst of her husband's jubilation. His Excellency himself looked somewhat startled, though we were to find out later that he had learned, during many years of marital felicity, to expect unpredictable reactions from his wife. "She must not think she can do that kind of thing," declared the French Ambassadors in a peeved tone. "We are no longer *juniors*. I am now an Ambassador and don't like to scramble into a dress to receive unexpected visitors. She is the wife of the President of the United States and should know better than to come unannounced! Our relationship must be a dignified one now that we are each at the top of the ladder!"

Later on, when another of Madame de Laboulaye's bombshells burst in our midst we decided that if Joan of Arc could take it, Eleanor Roosevelt could hardly expect favoritism. The Ambassador put the girl-soldier in her place once and for all at her very first official reception.

One of the paramount obligations of the wife of the French envoy to Washington is to entertain the members of the Alliance Française. A tea was arranged for these pursuants of French culture and Franco-American amity. The new "chatelaine," as the newspapers persisted

in calling the French Ambassadors, was an excellent housewife. She had counted noses and cakes in anticipation of the event. The guests arrived and it soon became apparent that Madame de Laboulaye had been decidedly bearish in her estimate of the provisions for the tea party. An attaché was hurriedly dispatched to the nearest bakery with orders to bring back two dozen more *petit fours*. The guests, unaware of the behind-the-scenes flurry, sipped their tea and talked about France. As usual, the conversation turned upon the popular heroes of the country. Madame de Laboulaye, the daughter of a Royalist general, graciously admitted that she forgave Lafayette his part in the French Revolution. After all, he was a Marquis.

That other less well-born idol of France, Jeanne d'Arc, did not get off so lightly. There is a statue of the French saint in Meridian Hill Park, just opposite the old French Embassy. It was presented by the women of Paris to the women of America. One of the guests began an enthusiastic eulogy of the girl-soldier. Madame de Laboulaye cut her short with the firm remark: "Of course, you understand, she was not a well-brought-up young girl. No properly reared young person would gallop around the country-side on horseback alone!"

Madame de Laboulaye had two main interests in life—"les convenances"—the proprieties—and household matters. Her intense preoccupation with all the details connected with these two interests led her to install a direct wire between the Chancery, where the Ambassador did his work, and the Embassy, which was just large enough for the family. She would frequently phone her husband

and sometimes interrupt important official conversations in order to retail to him the latest family developments. There were endless calls concerning the daily activities of the children; discussions as to what they should be allowed to do and with whom they should be allowed to go.

The buying for a large family and staff of servants also came under her personal supervision. One day she discovered that the chef was charging her thirty-five cents for a twenty-cent pineapple. The Ambassador was 'phoned a number of times until it was finally decided that the chef would be deprived of the privilege of buying for the Embassy table. This task was turned over to an attaché's wife, who had to give up her English lessons in order to take charge of the commissariat. Such details are not supposed to be the province of a member of an Embassy staff, but the attaché and his wife concluded that pleasing Madame de Laboulaye was a surer road to promotion than the pursuit of perfection in the English language.

The former French Premier, Edouard Herriot, was coming to Washington as the special representative of France at the gathering of Premiers President Roosevelt had invited to the Capital in April, 1933, for a discussion of world problems. The Embassy was up to its neck in preparations for the reception of the one French political leader who had the courage to advocate in the Chamber of Deputies that the payments on the French war debt be continued.

A few days before the *Ile de France* was due in New

York, de Laboulaye was engaged in a telephone conversation with the State Department in reference to Herriot's impending visit. Madame rang him on her private wire. He motioned to one of his secretaries to answer the ring. The secretary, after a brief exchange with Her Excellency, passed the receiver to the Ambassador with the words: "The Ambassadress insists that she must speak to you. It is very important." The State Department was cut off. Madame wished to know whether the New York guests, whom her husband had asked to lunch that day, were sufficiently important to warrant the use of the expensive pink linen tablecloth, or whether the second best was good enough. The fine pink linen cloth had been on the inventory of the Embassy linen when she moved in, and Madame, an excellent "*femme d'intérieur*," was as careful of the possessions of the French Republic as she was of her own belongings.

The embassies and legations of France all over the world, could call upon the famous Garde-meuble in Paris, crammed with treasures belonging to the state, for table appointments, silverware, tapestries, pictures and rugs. Theoretically, an ambassador or minister could order from the Garde-meuble any item which would add to the French atmosphere of his official home. The plan was carried out as far as the major posts were concerned. An Excellency's request in such matters would generally be heeded. But legations in out of the way spots had to fight for each fork and spoon they got.

I stopped off in Port-au-Prince on a Caribbean cruise and was received for luncheon by the French Minister



to Haiti. He was a charming, cultured gentleman who accepted the inevitability of French collapse with philosophy, tinged with a lassitude brought on by bad food and the tropical sun. He lived in a barren house almost devoured by the jungle. There were no funds with which to fight the encroaching weeds. The reception rooms were bare, except for a few wicker chairs and tables.

The Minister had written time and again, he told me apologetically, to the French Foreign Office, asking for pictures, hangings, and glassware for his legation, but his request was never heeded. The government official who acted as director of the famous Garde-meuble felt a positive sense of triumph every time he succeeded in keeping an item safe in Paris. Nevertheless, the Minister did his best to keep up the tradition and to entertain the French-speaking Haitian society in his barren rooms.

No self-respecting French chef would go to Haiti to waste his art upon the tropical flies, so the local gentry who had French recipes handed down from generation to generation, would pitch in and help when there was to be a party at the French legation. There was no pastry shop in Port-au-Prince and the Minister's daughter and the dusky ladies of the capital would get together and make the cakes.

The Minister was an intelligent man. He had traveled through South and Central America and had been amazed at the extent of German propaganda in the countries he visited. Even his own post, Little Haiti, had not been overlooked. His detailed reports to Paris, like his demands for furniture, were pigeon-holed and he was allowed to vegetate among the greedy weeds.

The new Embassy in Washington was much better treated by the gentleman who guarded so jealously the treasures of France. De Laboulaye had succeeded where Claudel had failed. He had induced Paris to spend \$450,000 for the purchase of a sumptuous residence in Washington.

The French Government acquired a grey stone neo-Tudor mansion which had belonged to the late John Hays Hammond, of South African diamond fame. Sterling silver, exquisite linens, cut glass, were generously furnished to the new Washington Embassy by la Republique. A charming parade of white Sèvres cherubs and nymphs strolled through the floral decorations on the table. The chef of the Embassy—paid by the State—had not his peer in Washington. The dinners of the de Laboulayes had the cachet of a fine cuisine and a beautifully appointed table, but Madame de Laboulaye's remarks were not always as palatable as her chef's works of art. Madame's very virtues stood her in bad stead. An ardent church-woman, she made the remark at one of her dinners: "The Catholic Church is the only hope of salvation for the United States." This created a somewhat unfortunate reaction in non-Catholic quarters.

De Laboulaye would affectionately refer to the benevolent tyrant who ran the family so efficiently as "my irrepressible child." But occasionally even the envoy's philosophic acceptance of his wife's frank expressions of her highly personal reactions, would be ruffled. Louis Schneider, the famous editor-in-chief of the Parisian weekly, *L'Illustration*, arrived in Washington with a personal letter of introduction to the Ambassador from the

head of the French Foreign Office. M. de Laboulaye hastily organized a luncheon party in obedience to the letter's command to show the bearer every courtesy. It was summertime and Washington was half emptied of its diplomats. The only guests from the Corps were the newly arrived Netherlands Minister and Madame de With. Turning to her husband's diplomatic colleague who was on her right, Madame de Laboulaye remarked in a clear tone of voice: "Excellency, this is a very informal luncheon. Everybody is away and we had to pick our guests where we could find them. This is the best we could do at the last minute. Don't judge our parties by what you see here!" The remark went from guest to guest around the table. By the time the *crème renversée* was passed everyone had heard it.

Even more disastrous than the Ambadress' social *pétards* were her boasts of the family connection with the Roosevelts. Madame de Laboulaye had her own ideas about the kind of contacts which should exist between the Roosevelts and de Laboulayes. She did not approve of the unostentatious informality of their earlier relationship, but she fully expected to be singled out by the First Lady for public notice. The occasional flowers Mrs. Roosevelt sent from the green houses of the White House in memory of an old friendship failed to satisfy her. The Ambadress did not realize that every gesture of the wife of the President, by virtue of her position, acquires a peculiar significance. A diplomat cannot be divorced from his country. A public sign of unusual favor to any one envoy from the President or his wife is likely to be interpreted from an international angle by the rest of

the Corps, and by sections of Congress and the press. Hence the White House must maintain a cordial reserve towards members of the Corps unless an indication of approval or disapproval serves a specific diplomatic purpose.

Madame de Laboulaye refused to understand that the First Lady could not serve as a publicity vehicle for the wife of an ambassador. Little did the Quai d'Orsay dream of the embarrassment she would cause the White House by her claim to "most favored treatment." The de Laboulayes ended by having only the most formal relations with the Roosevelts. This was the *finis* of the personal touch upon which the Quai d'Orsay had built such high hopes when the de Laboulayes sailed for America.



## V

# THE ERSATZ AMBASSADOR

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MANY OF France's envoys reached ambassadorial rank by taking the cure regularly for overeating and by avoiding any possible action which might cause uneasiness in the Foreign Office. An ambassador who wanted to enjoy life in peace would send reports back home to the effect that "All is for the best in the best of all possible worlds, and why not? *I am in Washington, or Rome, or Tokio.*" Such was André Lefevre de Laboulaye. Life was so much simpler for a French envoy who believed in his own glowing accounts of French relations with the country which had the opportunity of receiving him as ambassador.

Washington in 1933, under the first New Deal, was a far cry from the Washington André de Laboulaye had known twenty years before, but an ambassador of the old school could not stoop to ask anybody for information about this new America. An Excellence, by definition,

*had* to know it all. Not once in his three years in Washington, did de Laboulaye feel it necessary to summon his attachés for a general conference—a pooling of information.

One of the absolute perquisites of a French diplomat who reaches the zenith of his career is to hear a daily soothing chorus from the underlings on his staff. "Yes, Mr. Ambassador," it runs, or "Perfect, Excellency!" Many top-ranking French diplomats felt entitled to exact subservience, even servility, from their subordinates. A young man with sufficient suppleness of mind to echo faithfully the opinions of his chiefs—social, political and even religious—was sure to advance rapidly in his career. A contradiction might be fatal—so an Excellence was seldom contradicted. So well did French officials understand this that one of de Laboulaye's attachés, who had been identified with the anticlerical group in France, made a graceful genuflection when he found himself on the staff of the practicing Catholic Ambassador.

His air attaché, who had been detached from the Ministry of Aviation and sent especially to Washington to make a thorough study of American manufacturing techniques, accepted with eagerness the Ambassador's "suggestion" that he spend several hours a day coaching the young de Laboulaye in arithmetic.

It was only human that the staff should be subject to the whim of the Ambassador. His Excellency was in a position to make or break the members of his staff.

French diplomats in Washington, before the advent of the Vichy regime, led on the whole, very agreeable lives. Their privileges exempted them from the small annoy-

ance that plague American citizens. The diplomatic license tags on their cars, the magic letters "DPL," excused them from parking or speeding penalties. They had, of course, no income tax to pay. Imported wines, cheeses, *pâtés de foie gras*, chocolates, clothes and perfumes came through the American customs, duty-free. Surrounded by their own furniture, drinking their own wines, associating with the other members of the Corps, who nearly all spoke French, made life in Washington not unlike that in a good-sized town of France. Eating well, drinking better, cherishing the conception of themselves as symbols of French prestige abroad, they lived in a state of insulated euphoria.

Some of the younger attachés tried to break away from the routine existence—pleasant as it was. They wanted to explore the American mind and country. But initiative was consistently discouraged by their chiefs and they were forced to stick to routine jobs in the Chancery—to avoid any movement that might rock the boat.

France was rapidly becoming a bureau-anarchy. Superimposed upon an extremely flexible political system was a caste of permanent officialdom which had one purpose in life: the exploitation of its privileges. This was true of all French civil servants but that attitude on the part of her diplomats had its own peculiar tragedy.

The Soviet and the Nazi Embassies went in for entertaining on a large scale as part of a general plan of action. It was a necessary, at times an important, contributing factor to their amazing diplomatic achievements in Washington.

M. de Laboulaye had the horror, usually associated

with the French bourgeoisie, of being extravagant. Many of France's envoys assumed that the Representation Allowance belonged to them, and that dowries for their young daughters and security for their old age were legitimate items in the yearly entertainment budget. De Laboulaye contented himself with the minimum effort: the usual diplomatic dinners, an occasional tea or a musicale when some patriotic French artist came to town and offered his services.

A festive occasion in France without champagne is like a birthday party in America without ice cream and cake. Paul McNutt, a Past National Commander of the American Legion, was granted the Legion of Honor by the French War Department. De Laboulaye had to make the presentation by pinning the order on the recipient's breast and bestowing a kiss on both of his cheeks. On the appointed day, we assembled in the drawing room of the French Embassy. In addition to the staff some fifteen members of the Legion had been invited to witness the ceremony. M. de Laboulaye performed faultlessly with a graceful little speech about Lafayette and eternal Franco-American amity. The handsome Paul McNutt stood stiffly at attention during the speech and accepted bravely the crowning accolade. The guests crowded around him to admire his new decoration while footmen started to pass sandwiches and cakes. The Ambassador had decided that this was not a champagne occasion. He had just received from friends in the vineyard regions of France a nice "petit vin" (non-vintage wine) which he assured everybody tasted just as good as champagne only it does not go to your head so fast. "Besides," Ma-



dame seconded him disarmingly, "it is so much less expensive!"

De Laboulaye's ignorance of the American set-up made him quite content to rely upon his old-time friendship with Franklin Roosevelt and with the Undersecretary of State, William Phillips, for the accomplishment of his diplomatic duties. His colleagues, the German and the Russian Ambassadors were entertaining lavishly but they never even attempted to make an American official *do* anything for their respective countries. They were content to see as much as possible of Congress and the press—to see the people whose opinions would eventually decide the course of action of Presidents and Undersecretaries of State. Not only did M. de Laboulaye fail to grasp the importance of these elements but he managed to rub the wrong way the few politicians and newspapermen he did meet.

When he ran into the Senator from North Dakota, Gerald P. Nye, at a social gathering, he hardly acknowledged the introduction. Nye was the man who had dared to investigate J. P. Morgan—and J. P. Morgan represented the American aristocracy. Nye remembered the cold shoulder tendered by the French Ambassador well enough to speak of it to friends years later. De Laboulaye relied so blindly upon his friendship with the Undersecretary of State that he imagined the State Department was in his pocket. Relations between high ranking French officials are on such a formal basis that they frequently misinterpret American informality. De Laboulaye would rush to "mon ami Phileeps" with his problems, not stop-

ping to ask himself whether it would be entirely easy for Phillips to act as advisor to the French ambassador and as an official of the American Government. On one occasion de Laboulaye questioned his friend in the State Department about some confidential data of international importance which the French naval attaché, Captain Sablé, had obtained.

London and Washington were engaging in secret discussions relative to the tonnage and gun-power of new battleships as a preliminary to the London Naval Conference of October, 1935. France was left out of the conversations because she opposed large-sized men-of-war. The French attaché got wind of the negotiations and sent a confidential cable direct to his Navy Department. He showed it to the Ambassador as a matter of routine. Without saying a word to his attaché, de Laboulaye rushed to the State Department and quizzed Phillips about what he had just heard. The Undersecretary of State, pledged to secrecy, dutifully denied that any such negotiations were going on. De Laboulaye hurried back to the Embassy, and without consulting Sablé warned the Quai not to pay any attention to the information that had just been cabled by the naval attaché. He then summoned Captain Sablé and leaning back in his chair said with a broad smile: "Your friends were making fun of you, Captain—you'll do better to show me your cables *before* you send them to the Navy Department!"

Though military, naval, and air attachés are under the nominal jurisdiction of their ambassador, they are, because of the technical nature of their work, directly re-

sponsible to their own departments. They are not actual subordinates of the envoy—a fact most French ambassadors heartily resented. But this internecine strife between the gold braid of the military and the gold seal of the diplomat was only one of many that plagued the course of French foreign relations.

The poet who said: "Every man has two countries: his own and France," did the French people a great disservice. So blindly did French diplomats believe in the prestige of French culture that few of them ever realized that in order to be effective they must be cooperative.

From every city in the United States where there was more than one French official came a story of dissension or feud—tales monotonous in their similarity.

In Chicago, the Consul General would be at loggerheads with the vice consul. In New York, the French Colony would be split in two factions, the Consulate General pulling for one side. In Washington, the Counsellor of Embassy was undermining his Ambassador. The Ambassador was trying to get rid of several of his attachés.

French technicians employed in private industries in America had learned to avoid French officialdom like poison. I have heard, time and again, the same remarks from these men who had made places for themselves in this country: "I keep away from the official colony—there are too many rows, too many 'histoires.'"

There was practically no contact between French newspaper representatives in America and the Embassy. The head of the Havas Agency in the United States,

Camille Lemer cier, was not even on speaking terms with His Excellency.

At this crucial point in the history of France a realistic analysis of American psychology would have been valuable to the Quai d'Orsay. A study of isolationist sentiment in the United States would have been more useful to France than de Laboulaye's speeches about Lafayette. That gallant French general's contribution to an America in travail had become history—it was no longer news. De Laboulaye, having nothing to give the press, had practically no contact with it. It must be said, in fairness to the French Ambassador, that his job was difficult. German diplomats had the advantage of representing a dynamic movement; of belonging to a country which was *making* news. When German soldiers marched into the Rhineland, for instance, it was not unnatural that the French Ambassador should be asleep, while his German colleague was smilingly on the job. It would have taken ingenuity and indefatigable zeal to compete in such a situation, and de Laboulaye had neither.

Camille Lemer cier, who had been trained in American journalism in the Paris office of the *Chicago Daily News*, could have been of great help to the envoy. Lemer cier's office was a clearing-house for information from Havas men all over the United States, Central and South America. The Havas service was subsidized by the French government and Lemer cier had orders from the Quai d'Orsay to collaborate with the French Ambassador. The Lemer ciers arrived in the Capital and called at the embassy. Both he and his wife had been divorced before

their marriage, and Madame de Laboulaye would not accept a divorced woman socially. Lemer cier would not accept a snub to his wife and a thinly disguised war started between the distinguished French journalist and his ambassador.

The government of Leon Blum became aware that the America of the reports of M. de Laboulaye differed from the America described in long dispatches by the numerous French press correspondents who had come to the United States to report on the New Deal government of President Roosevelt.

The discrepancy was so glaring that a discreet investigation was made by Yvon Delbos, then Foreign Minister. He discovered that de Laboulaye's embassy was considered, by those who counted in Washington, as representative of 18th century France. The Washington Ambassador was ordered to bring his reports up to date.

Paris had also been dismayed at the lack of American reaction to the Rhineland invasion and at the little interest the American public showed toward the developing threat to the French system of European security. It was suggested to the French Ambassador that he do something about public opinion in America, and that he keep in closer contact with the Washington press.

His Excellency obediently dispatched invitations to tea to some fifty correspondents. At the bottom of each invitation were the typewritten words: "For Press Only." Exactly three newspapermen appeared—on assignment. As a rule, the members of the press, even in Washington, are not society-minded, but they share with the rest of

humanity a dislike for being snubbed. The "For Press Only" legend was on a par with the famous instructions given out by the British Embassy: that all journalists covering the events attending Their Majesties' stay in America, must wear purple armbands—"Like the harlots in medieval times" as one of them remarked. Ironically enough, it was the representatives of the democracies who had no time to waste on the members of the Fourth Estate. The totalitarian ambassadors, representing systems which had reduced their press to official echos, were showering American newspapermen with kind attentions.

Glaring as were M. de Laboulaye's shortcomings, his support from the career men in Paris would have maintained him in Washington had not Premier Blum wished to eliminate one of his competitors from the political scene.

Georges Bonnet, former Finance Minister, a left-over from the previous regime, still had a considerable following among French politicians. He was very much in the hair of the Prime Minister. In order to eliminate him, Blum offered him the Washington Embassy.

Bonnet, the financial wizard of France, had been heavily involved in the Stavisky affair. During a street demonstration against his government, he had escaped the popular ire by jumping out of the back window of his office and fleeing home through side streets. He saw in a trip to America a chance to wash out his sins in salt water, and to juggle himself into a fresh position of power upon the successful completion of a mission to the United States. He accepted the ambassadorship. It was to be his

first excursion into the field of diplomacy. Before he left Paris he made a study of the errors of his predecessors and determined not to allow the Washington post to remain in the diplomatic doldrums.

The announcement of Bonnet's appointment didn't create the sensation Paris had expected. Washington had become so used to the presence of important Ex's that the fact that the new Ambassador was an ex-Minister of Finance didn't cause much of an anticipatory ripple. But the town takes kindly to all foreign envoys, for the Diplomatic Corps is one of the features of the Capital, like the Library of Congress, the Zoo, the Senate and the House. There are some ladies who learn the diplomatic list by heart—who even take it to bed with them. A very young attaché can become a mild sort of lion, if he is socially inclined—all he needs is a clean boiled shirt.

Georges Bonnet had more than that—he had the title of "Excellency" and he had an extremely pretty wife. Bonnet himself was far from handsome. He had a bird-like beak and ice-blue eyes with a keen, far-away look in them. That sly, intent face was the living image of a portrait of Louis XI. The Bonnets in the space of nine short months made quite a place for themselves in Washington.

Madame Bonnet, one of the outstanding *mondaines* of Paris, saw the Capital as another amusing social experience. It became known that the French Ambassadors liked to go around with the younger, unofficial set. Conveyed by an attaché who knew the cocktail crowd, tall, dark extremely chic Madame Bonnet was soon in the midst of a gay social life.

The new Ambadress had nothing to worry about; she could eschew the official routine; her husband was not a career diplomat; she didn't have to go through the motions. He would leave Washington when he was offered the Ministry of State, or Finance, which would occur automatically when Blum went out and his friends came in again. So she amused herself and left affairs of State to her husband.

Bonnet had other ideas. He had heard about the importance of "les isolationistes" in the Senate, who even then were beginning to worry the French press considerably. Bonnet was very much puzzled by this group. To trade, to sell out, to fight, to conquer, to defend, to ally, or to betray were all understandable actions; but for America to refuse to make money by selling arms to her sister democracies seemed, to the logical French mind, slightly insane.

The Ambassador was curious to see one or two of these odd people in the flesh. He asked me to arrange a party and stipulated that I was not to ask any of the people who generally made the tour of Washington drawing rooms. He wanted to meet as many Congressmen, Senators and newspapermen as possible. Some of the politicians were curious to see Bonnet. France had had a well-known poet-ambassador in Washington, a man with vision who could do nothing. He had been followed by a well-known bureaucrat, who was content to do nothing. Now here was Bonnet, one of their own colleagues. The Ambassador was deputy from his District in France—even during his stay in Washington. They came: Homer Bone of Washington, Gerald Nye of North Dakota, Wil-



liam McAdoo of California, and some others. Bonnet could speak little English, but he had a flair for human beings and for finding out what makes them tick. With the aid of an interpreter and his own astounding intuition, he carried on a lively conversation that lasted until two o'clock in the morning. He became convinced that the isolationists meant what they said, and that they were strong enough to keep America from mixing up in Europe.

What my American guests thought of Bonnet, I don't know—except that some of them were obviously amused by his description of the origins of French aristocracy. Bonnet had already discovered that the average American had no use for the European nobility, but that he was curious to know as much as possible about it. He gave them quite a lively description of the technique of advancement at the French court. It ran something like this: Those Frenchmen who had the privilege of being accepted at court vied with each other to be as close as possible to the Person of the King. If one of them could achieve the supreme honor of emptying His Majesty's washbasin—whenever he washed—he was fortunate. If at the same time he was able to amuse the King by some appropriate story which made him laugh in spite of his morning indigestion (brought on by a light breakfast of ham, pheasants, partridges, venison, and pasties), the wisecrack might be worth a marquissate or even a dukedom.

Madame Bonnet liked cocktail society; Bonnet preferred the company of politicians and newspapermen; but both loved to go to market. They were fascinated by

the abundance, variety, and cleanliness of the Washington market stalls. I still remember the look of amazement on Bonnet's razor-like face as he peered into the great piles of strange American fish. He said he didn't recognize a single one of them except the flounder and the trout. The real wealth of America was a revelation to the former Minister of Finance of France. He claimed that his country, poor in comparison to the United States, was already envied for her wealth by her neighbors. He wondered how long America would be able to guard her stupendous possessions.

The fly-wheel of French politics made another rapid revolution, and Bonnet's friends were in again. Bonnet returned to Paris as Secretary of State. The politician had discovered in nine months what the bureaucrat hadn't found out in three years—that the America which had conceived the League of Nations was definitely out of Europe. In late 1937, upon his return to France, he warned his government that there would be no American support in a crisis and that France had best go in for appeasement on a grand scale. He personally put M. Daladier on the plane for Munich.

The Paris Foreign Office was beginning to rate Washington as a post of major importance; it used considerable care in selecting a successor to Georges Bonnet. An intelligent, hard-working career man was sent to Washington. The last ambassador from the last democratic government of France had already proved himself an excellent servant in other posts. In addition to his intellectual qualifications, he had all the trimmings with

which to match England's distinguished Sir Ronald Lindsay.

Count René Doynel de St. Quentin possessed one of the oldest names in France. He was good looking, rich, and a bachelor. The announcement of his impending arrival did cause a flurry in social Washington. At the first meeting of the Alliance Française with the new Ambassador acting as Honorary President, there were not seats for all the ladies who had been suddenly seized with passion for French culture.

But St. Quentin had no intention of becoming a society pet, via the culture route or any other. Bonnet's insistence on the importance of "the Hill" had made an impression on the Quai d'Orsay. St. Quentin began to entertain lavishly, it's true, but some of the grandes dames who felt that they should edit the guest lists of the bachelor envoy were horrified at his mixed parties. The new Ambassador was inviting even those Senators and Representatives who "did not go round"; he was going out of his way to be amiable to any Washingtonian who left cards. He even asked many who had not left pasteboards at the door of the Embassy.

His informality was a little shocking; he referred to himself as "St. Quentin," never using his title. The Ambassador frequently made his own 'phone calls without passing through the usual battery of secretaries.

On a trip from New York to Washington, a middle-aged couple recognized him from his pictures and spoke to him. The lady was interested in the Audubon Society, and St. Quentin, who had the habit of knowing something about almost everything, was able to tell them a

great deal about the famous ornithologist. They were such pleasant company that he invited them to dinner. Even the fact that the gentleman in the case turned out to be a member of the Foreign Relations Committee of the House did not attenuate the shock felt in some quarters when it came known that Count de St. Quentin had invited to dinner a couple whom he had picked up on a train.

The Ambassador was not precedent-bound. Even as a young attaché he had shown his independence by an act of rebellion which might have proved fatal to his career. It probably would have ended his diplomatic life if his title had not been illustrious and his fortune considerable. While playing bridge with his ambassador, he caught him with a revoke and called it, to the consternation of the other players. St. Quentin would tell the story with a twinkle in his eye: "I was only a third secretary and I actually dared call my chief's revoke!"

The new envoy was the first to see the entertainment possibilities of the wooded gardens at the back of the Embassy. Dinner parties would linger on in comfortable chairs on the terrace, after the guest of honor had done his duty and gone home at the protocol-dictated hour. There were garden parties when the pink dogwood came out in the woods behind the lawns.

St. Quentin was an authority on wines, and offered his guests superb vintages. Luncheons, dinners, teas, soirées: the ambassador was entertaining in grand style. He was spending long hours in the chancery, generally arriving at the Embassy just in time for his almost daily entertainments.

Many of the people who had criticized the French for their lack of contacts began to accuse the new ambassador of trying to influence public opinion on behalf of France. Young Vandenberg, the son and secretary of the Senator from Michigan, was actually alarmed when his parents accepted an invitation to dinner at the French Embassy. The young man informed a group of people at a cocktail party that both St. Quentin and Lord Lothian were dangerous propagandists—a description which greatly flattered both envoys.

Count de St. Quentin had appeared too tardily on the Washington scene. It was no longer possible to take a leaf from Luther's and Troyanovsky's diplomatic diaries.

The summer of 1939 was to be remembered by the French Embassy for more reasons than one.

Every Frenchman who had any claim on the government purse insisted that he be sent to Washington to explain France to America: rightist senators, leftist senators, deputies of the right, deputies of the left, deputies of the right center, and deputies of the left center—they arrived in squads.

The rightists were chic and haughty—nothing was good enough for them; the leftists were hearty and hungry—they were delighted to have discovered the American institution of breakfast—one more meal to add to the copious luncheons and dinners which French officialdom was offering them.

The rightists expected a complete Intourist service from the Embassy. The attachés must be guides and chauffeurs, provide for accommodations and entertain-

ment. The leftists were pleased with small things, everything was new and news to them. One errand they all performed. They deposited a wreath on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. The wreath was generally charged to the French Embassy.

After the invasion by the two chambers came the invasion by the French economists, then by the members of the Chamber of Commerce. Finally the municipal councillors from small French towns began to drift into Washington. They had crossed the ocean on special tourist rates to visit the World's Fair. Before leaving the United States, they wanted to see Washington and to call at the Official Home of France in America. These groups had paid their own way and consequently expected very little attention from French officials. They were content with a cup of tea and a chance to take snapshots of the Embassy gardens.

St. Quentin would hurry home from his buzzing Chancery to receive the visiting Frenchmen. The last delegate from Republican France to be entertained at the French Embassy was the lady delegate to the International Poultry Conference in Cleveland. After attending the conference, she arrived in Washington with six ducks, nine pigeons, and four hens. She presented letters of introduction to the Ambassador, and was invited to lunch at the Embassy. She explained quite solemnly during the meal that the International Poultry Conference was an important factor in bettering international relations. She had been amazed at the meeting of the minds of the delegates to the conference, who came from all over the world. Her opinion of the Japanese had risen enormously.

The Japanese experts, it seemed, were the only ones who could distinguish the sex of day-old ducks. . . .

Dinners, teas, fêtes—Munich. More dinners, musicales, garden-parties—the invasion of Poland. France was at war. Appearances must be saved—confidence shown. Black ties replaced white, parties grew smaller, but they went on. . . .

“Les isolationistes” were curiosities to Ambassador Bonnet. They were a nightmare to St. Quentin. The French Ambassador ran into Bennett Champ Clark at a dinner, and the envoy of the French Democracy and the guardian of American Democracy glared at each other as if they represented conflicting ideologies. To St. Quentin, Clark was “worse than a Nazi—the man who tried to prevent weapons of defense from reaching his country.” Clark was much less tense; he contented himself with recalling the fact that he had been overcharged by the French peasants for eggs when he was in France with the A. E. F.

France fell.

The doorbell of the Embassy rang frequently during the following days. Liveried chauffeurs and messenger boys were bringing in flowers from many of the ladies who had been entertained in the Home of France. Touching messages of regret for the end of a nation accompanied the flowers. The cards were premature—the nation might be crushed, but its bureaucracy was still very much alive. The Vichy Embassy was to acquire a larger staff than the French Republic had ever sent to Washington—even in wartime.

The civil servants who had served Clemenceau, Her-

riot, Poincaré, Tardieu, Blum and Daladier could not be expected to boggle at so respectable a symbol of Bureaucracy as Maréchal Pétain. Vichy would have no trouble finding diplomats to represent her ambiguity all over the world—which is one of the things Herr Hitler had in mind when he permitted the old Marshal to fondle his dream of Free France.

The members of St. Quentin's staff really persuaded themselves that the Marshal would be able to preserve a France for them and their children. They would not, they could not grasp the fact that France was completely under the German heel. Vichy offered the illusion of independence, and Vichy offered bread and butter. The alternative was anything but bright. Washington was already littered with diplomats without countries and without jobs. The wife of the former Austrian envoy was selling lingerie; the wife of a former Polish air attaché was peddling jam. The wife of a young French attaché, Comtesse de Gramont, whose husband had joined de Gaulle in England, was selling hats and living on hope and courage.

It was only human that St. Quentin's staff should swallow Vichy, though many of them choked on the morsel. Oddly enough, the naval attaché, the one member of the staff who had taken the trouble to call at the British Embassy before the fall of France and pledge his undying faith in the Anglo-French cause, was the one who leapt on the Vichy bandwagon with the greatest haste.

As long as the gentlemanly St. Quentin stayed at his post, the illusion was kept alive that France was still French. The Ambassador gave a last reception in the



Embassy gardens. At first sight everything seemed the same, the long buffet set out on the lawn, the chef's delicious cakes, the wine punch, the affability of the host to all and sundry, regardless of rank or station. It was September and the gardens were still in bloom, but frost had begun to touch the flowers and the leaves. Gone was the good-natured bilingual bantering that usually went on between the staff and the Embassy guests. There were no Americans present. Only French residents of Washington had been asked. France was withdrawing unto herself, leaving behind the friends who had insufficiently supported her in her hour of need. She was not yet ready to betray.

Gaston Henry-Haye arrived in Washington preceded by rumors that he was Ambassador William Bullitt's choice for the Washington post, and that it was through the personal intervention of the popular American envoy to Paris that he had obtained the job. This rumor contained a grain of truth. Henry-Haye, a Parisian lawyer, had been a candidate for the ambassadorship to the United States for many a year. He had haunted the American Embassy in Paris during the regimes of Ambassadors Edge and Straus. Bullitt inherited the funny little man who wore abnormally high heels, used large gestures, and declared so enthusiastically his love for the great democracy across the sea.

Bullitt had suggested Henry-Haye as a possible successor to Ambassador Bonnet when the latter returned to Paris to become Secretary of State. Count René de St. Quentin got the job. It was not until the fall of France

that Henry-Haye had his chance to cross the seas and to present himself as "Boulleet's" choice for the Washington ambassadorship.

When Laval was looking for Vichy's first envoy to the United States, he had to please both von Ribbentrop and Marshal Pétain. Henry-Haye was acceptable to von Ribbentrop. In order to convince the Maréchal that Henry-Haye was the right man, Laval pulled out Ambassador Bullitt's old recommendation of his friend and presented it as a recent indorsement. The matter was settled.

I talked to Vichy's envoy only once—shortly after his arrival. It was during an unforgettable luncheon at the Embassy.

My first impression of my host was pleasant. The little Frenchman, with his bright blue eyes, red cheeks, and bombastic style of conversation, is not unattractive. His English is good and he speaks of his former association with Americans in glowing terms.

The chef was his usual expert self; the bisque cherubs and nymphs were still chasing each other across the fine linen on the table. St. Quentin's exceptional cellar had been left behind—the Clipper had no space for vintage wines. Embossed upon the knives and forks was the familiar "R.F."—*Republique Française*—but the conversation had radically changed. It would spurt and lag, punctuated once in a while by the forced loud laughter of Vichy's representative, who seesawed between tearful assertions that the French were starving and exalted pronouncements that France was at last on the right bandwagon. His aide and shadow, Major Bertrand-Vigne,

sat like a sphinx at the table, shoving food into his mouth, grunting approval of the diatribes against the British war effort in France. Some of the string of facts cited by the Vichy Ambassador were uncontestably true, but the conclusion—that an ally is justified in betrayal—I could not accept. We were only six, and the meal finally ended. We all went into the library for coffee and liqueurs. As I arose to leave, His Excellency insisted that I visit his new office, that he had something of interest to show me. Shortly after his arrival, Henry-Haye had moved all of his attachés, whose offices had been scattered over the city, into one building. For this he rented the home of a former Italian diplomat about two blocks from the Embassy. We walked down the street to the Chancery. He escorted me into his private office and showed me a familiar face—that of Maréchal Pétain. I had met the Marshal upon a number of occasions. It was he who first sent my husband to the United States on a military mission. Henry-Haye placed himself in front of the portrait and with a sweeping gesture said: “Voilà notre grand chef, le Maréchal!” (Here is our beloved chief, the Marshall!)

Though Henry-Haye had piously invoked the Marshal’s name several times during luncheon, I knew that his reverence for the new chief of state had not prevented him from tearing up the Marshal’s cables when their contents didn’t suit him. In the early fall of 1940 he got orders from Pétain to dismiss one of his aides, Major Bertrand-Vigne. “I consider the message as void,” said the ambassador to the attaché who handed him the cable. And he added firmly, “Vigne stays!”

Besides this portrait there was a large French flag on the wall—the familiar tricolor. The flag and the portrait were the objects of “unusual interest.” There was nothing else except a large desk and chair, and a visitor’s armchair.

Henry-Haye indicated the armchair. No sooner had I seated myself than the telephone rang. His Excellency picked up the instrument and proceeded to have a very interesting conversation with a Mr. X on the other end of the line. For a moment I wondered at his indiscretion in allowing me to listen to such very private matters—he had a lot to say to Mr. X. Henry-Haye described at length just what the powers that be in France could do to people who didn’t play ball with the New Regime. His tone became increasingly violent as I sat up straight and began to look interested. It dawned upon me that I was the chief beneficiary of the conversation: that I had been brought into his office in order to hear it. I found this ersatz method of attempted intimidation peculiarly distasteful. I would have had more respect for the little man if he had talked directly to me. I got up and left Mr. Henry-Haye at his telephone.

The Vichy Embassy today, as far as titles of nobility go, holds the first rank in Washington. Comtes, Vicomtes, Marquis, and Barons abound. The Catholic nobility of France, which never had any use for the French Republic, is rallying to Fascist France.

In the legations and embassies of Vichy throughout Central and South America, these titles are of valuable assistance in spreading the totalitarian ideology. In Wash-

ington, they are accepted by some French and Latin-American circles as representative of the glory of old France.

When France was a first rate military power, the government found that three service attachés in Washington were adequate—although at that time there was much business being transacted between the French attachés and the American War and Navy Departments. Disarmed France, suspected by the American government of playing into Axis hands, finds that seven service attachés are not too many.

Not long ago the French wife of an American official gave a large reception. Several French wives of American army officers were present. Vichy's military, naval, and air representatives were there in force, busily moving from group to group. Vichy's credo was being echoed throughout the room—"England must be defeated quickly so that the New Order in Europe can be established without delay. America must not help England," and somewhat inconsistently: "American democracy can do nothing but talk."

American women married to Frenchmen who are in Washington for the duration, are working surreptitiously for the Red Cross, but refuse to allow their names to be printed in the Washington papers in connection with benefits for Britain or for French refugees in England. They have been warned of reprisals against relatives in France if they are indiscreet.

Henry-Haye is the leading player in one of those little pieces of comic opera in which the French excel. His press attaché sings baritone to his tenor. In May the

Ambassador called at the State Department and solemnly handed Secretary Hull a long communication from Vichy, reaffirming her complete neutrality and purity of intention regarding the fighting democracies. The very same afternoon a frankly pro-Nazi Swedish journalist, Miss Alving, called at the Embassy and talked to M. Charles Brousse, the press attaché. After a chat about world conditions, she asked the question: "Is there really any difference between Vichy and the Axis?" Monsieur Brousse answered with a broad smile: "Only the very slightest."

Monsieur Henry-Haye and his staff are not getting very far with American society. Washington has become conscious of deeper issues than the rank or title of the guest of honor at a dinner party. Then too, a rumor has gone through the town that the F.B.I. is checking on the Embassy. Private cars no longer move slowly up the graceful curve that leads to the broad steps of the House of France. Henry-Haye's infrequent guests prefer the rapid anonymity of the taxicab.

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## VI

### PROCOPOMANIA

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"WHO THE HECK is Finland? What the heck is Finland? Where the heck is Finland? And supposing you do pay your seventy-five cent debt to the United States, so what? Hey! Give me beer! I want more beer!"

Chinese lanterns were gleaming in the garden of the Finnish Legation, where the recently arrived but already well-known Hjalmar Procope, was entertaining the gentlemen of the press in the spring of 1939. One journalist, slightly the worse for alternating glasses of German beer and Finnish schnapps, was loudly exercising the right of minority expression. Like the member of the Council of Athens who threw a piece of broken pottery at Aristides because he was sick of hearing him called "The Just," the inebriated newsman was hurling at Procope the fact that he was simply fed-up with "honest Finland."

The guests had been received by the smiling Minister in the main living room of the Legation, then ushered

into the dining room where the table was covered with truly Finnish delicacies: smoked reindeer, smoked eel, smoked sturgeon, and several kinds of patés. There were rows upon rows of glasses set out on the buffet. A butler handed a glass to each guest as he entered, and filled it with a fiery vodka imported directly from Finland.

The Minister himself took pains to explain that the Finnish brand of fire-water "is superior to the Russian because it is so much stronger." And strong it must have been to impel a Washington correspondent to ask, in May, 1939: "Who the heck is Finland?" The extraordinarily popular Procope could afford to be magnanimous. He bent over his befuddled guest and patiently explained where Finland was, what Finland was, who Finland was. He motioned to a waiter to supply the newsman with the beer he was loudly demanding and the vociferous minority member of the evening sank slowly under the table.

The tall blue-eyed Laplander had arrived in Washington less than a year before his country became engaged, for the first time, in an epic struggle with Soviet Russia. He brought to his Washington post the diplomatic experience he had gained as Foreign Minister and the business acumen he had developed as an exporter of wood pulp.

Procope found his new job of selling Finland to Washington almost completely done for him. The heckling reporter was a decided exception in a town which acclaimed honest Finland as the one white lamb in a flock of black sheep.



Even Congress exempted that country from its contention that the other states of the world were not fit associates for the United States. The most ardent isolationist members of both houses, when launching an attack on America's former war partners and on American participation in world affairs, would invariably make a verbal bow in the direction of Gentlemanly Finland. Finland's honesty, which at one time in world history would have been a normal policy, shone like a jewel in the midst of the sordid story of the bigger and richer states' indebtedness to America. Finland was proof that honor was not dead among nations, that there was still hope for a world built on respect of treaty and bond.

When Hjalmar Procope arrived in Washington, he stepped into an ideal atmosphere, the like of which has seldom greeted the representative of a foreign state.

Procope was a "pending" bachelor (divorce proceedings were in course) when he took over the Finnish Legation. That fact, plus his good looks and personal charm, immediately made him the most sought-after envoy of the Corps. The tall Finn was greeted with two-fold warmth—one handclasp for him—the other for honest Finland.

He was all the more welcome because everything had been so confusing of late. Ideological lines were crisscrossing the Diplomatic Corps. It was no longer as simple as it used to be when envoys were graded socially according to the importance of their respective countries. The personable German and Russian diplomats, Dieckhoff and Troyanovsky, had been nonetheless the representatives

of Naziism and Communism. The marble stairs of the Italian Embassy remained tarred with Fascismo although Ambassador Augusto Rosso had managed to throw a red carpet over them. There were anglophiles and franco-philes in the Capital who were ready to accept, with open arms, any ambassadors from England and France. But neither of these countries in late years had sent representatives who knew how to take advantage of the prestige they still enjoyed in the United States.

With the addition of Hjalmar Procope the Corps acquired, for the first time in many years, an attractive envoy who represented a popular country. When it became plain, shortly after his arrival, that honest little Finland was going to exterminate some of those horrid Bolsheviks, Procope became a hero, the personification of a dramatically appealing cause. As his country began to occupy the headlines of the news, Procope became the leading diplomatic figure of the town. He was soon on his way to becoming a cult; an idol of feminine Washington and a hero of male society. The cult rapidly reached such proportions that a name was invented for it: it was called Procopomania. The slender, six-foot, blue-eyed Finn had become, practically on sight, the embodiment of the Nordic ideal. When his country actually made its stand against the unpopular Soviet giant, a halo grew around his well-groomed head.

The minister's rooters were not confined to the feminine element. He was not a diplomatic lap-dog, the pet of the cocktail hour, though the ladies did all they could to take complete possession of him. At receptions, after the Russo-Finnish war began, Procope would be almost

swamped by women who felt so terribly about those white-clad Finns lying in the snow, and by men who would slap him on the back with inarticulate sympathy. Wherever he appeared, he was invariably the center of such a crowd that the remark became current in Washington drawing rooms: "That's either the punch bowl or Procopé over there!" Senator Green murmured good-naturedly to me, as he watched admirers gather around the Finn: "I wish that *I* could symbolize something!"

The symbol was not, however, losing its head. Procopé was saying that he wished that the ladies would not get quite so emotional over him and that Congress would be a little more so.

From the very first, the envoy naturally had hoped to capitalize the unique position his country enjoyed in the United States. Before he left Helsinki war clouds had been gathering on the far horizon. The Finns were determined to meet any threat to their independence, but they knew that they would need assistance; where was it more natural to look for help than in the United States, where Finland's reputation was as good as its gold?

As Soviet pressure on Finland became more pronounced, Procopé became more active; he threw open the Legation to reporters, singly or in groups; he pored over maps with them, explaining his country's position, the gravity of her problems, reiterating her determination to meet them. He became an incessant caller at the State Department, insisting on each visit that invasion was imminent and recapitulating Finland's needs if she were to stage a successful resistance. Procopé felt that Finland's cause could be compared to a pure culture in

a test tube. Only the happiest relations had existed between the Finnish and the American democracies. If ever America intended to support the democratic principle, surely she would help Finland survive. . . .

As far back as September, 1939, Procope called on Secretary Hull, and with tears in his eyes begged for some practical expression of American sympathy for his threatened country, reminding Mr. Hull that Finland was a debt-paying, law-abiding little State which only wanted to mind its own business. The Secretary could only answer that if Finland were invaded the United States would refuse to accept any Soviet assurances of purity of intention, and would immediately declare the U.S.S.R. a belligerent. Russia would then have to suffer all the dire consequences of America's policy of neutrality. . . .

By the fall of 1939, the State Department was undergoing a veritable Nordic invasion. The procession of Scandinavian Ministers was continuous. It was led by Procope, their chief spokesman, the representative of the perfect case and the perfect cause. On a Tuesday the agile Finn would leap up the broad steps of the State Department, pausing obligingly as photographers snapped his pictures. He was on the way to remind the Department that expressions of sympathy were appreciated in Helsinki, but that they would not help much on the Mannerheim Line. On a Wednesday blond, rotund Minister Bostrom of Sweden would proceed more decorously down the corridor to call on Jay Pierrepont Moffat (now U. S. Minister to Canada, then Chief of the European Division in the Department), to impress upon him

that Sweden felt directly menaced by a threat to Finland. On a Thursday the athletic Minister from Norway, Mr. Morgenstierne, would call on the Political Advisor to the Secretary of State, the handsome Jimmy Dunn, to point out that Norway would be directly menaced by a threat to Sweden. The Dutch, the Danes, and the others hurried down the high-ceilinged halls of the State Department to find out whether the United States would tolerate the invasion of a small country by an enormous bully. The envoys intimated that a successful invasion of Finland by Russia would throw their countries immediately into complete cooperation with Nazi Germany.

They were careful to explain that they, perpetual neutrals in all of Europe's squabbles for over a hundred years, understood the unwillingness of the American people to get mixed up with the fighting Europeans who made war their principal occupation. But would America remain an impassive observer if the "gentlemen of Europe" were to be assaulted by Communists or Nazis? Finland, in the eyes of their governments, was a test case. The three Nordic Kings had met at Stockholm and signed a mutual assistance pact to defend their neutrality. It was understood that the agreement would operate if the Finns were attacked. Washington was kept fully informed of the proceedings. The Nordic Ministers did not say it openly, but they gave the State Department to understand that their three nations numbering just over ten million people could not think of resisting either the Russians or the Germans without the effective support of the remaining democracies. The Stockholm agreement was predicated on immediate assistance, as soon as a

threat to their independence loomed.

The small waiting-room across the hall of Secretary Hull, and Undersecretary Sumner Welles, became the wailing wall of the Nordics. As each envoy waited his turn to see the Secretary or the Undersecretary he would pour out his anxiety to the others. The representatives came singly, and in pairs; they arrived with care-worn faces, and left with even longer faces. Not one of them refused to talk to the State Department reporters, who watch the door of Secretary Hull's office like cats at a mouse hole. On the contrary, they liked to unburden themselves to the eager but sympathetic young journalists.

After Finland's boundaries actually were violated, Procope's worries increased tenfold. He was even concerned by the fact that the news coming over the wires was cheerful! According to reports coming into the Legation, the badly-put-together Soviet planes were falling to pieces all over Finland; Soviet shells were not exploding; the Russian guns captured by the Finns showed serious constructional defects. The Finns were apparently performing miracles, and what to do with the miracles worried Procope. Just how far should he give publicity to the heroism of his countrymen in order to whip up American enthusiasm in the hope that a wave of public opinion would wash the isolationists off their neutrality perch? How could he stir such publicity, and in the same breath warn America that his country would eventually have to give up? How could he use the loud speaker and the soft pedal at the same time? He developed a two-fold technique—he talked loudly about Finnish heroism

to newspapermen, and whispered to people in official positions that even inefficiency multiplied by 180 millions *must* end by overwhelming six million Finns. . . .

By December, the Capital had gone completely Finnish; there were Finnish dresses and dolls in Washington stores; the Russian night club of the town gave its specialties Finnish names: Sibelius' "Finlandia" was now a must on musical programs. Ladies who had never heard of Helsinki before the arrival of Procope, were quoting statistics about the number of libraries in that capital and praising the high percentage of literacy among the Finns. Finnish relief groups sprang up all over town. Women engaged in knitting marathons to help warm the snowbound warriors. Procope was in constant demand. Every relief group expected a visit, a word of approval, a cheering smile from Finland's envoy.

Procope added these little duties to his already overburdened schedule, sparing himself no effort which might contribute to his country's valiant fight. Procopomania was at its height and its innocent victim was hoping against hope that his extraordinary personal successes might influence official Washington towards a more practical expression of sympathy for Finland.

In February the news from home was becoming less cheerful. Procope's worst fears began to be realized. Goliath was crushing David. Washington columnists chose that very moment to hint at the romance of the Finnish Minister: to suggest that he had a fiancée in England.

His Excellency was in much the same position as that of cinema stars or radio heroes, who have pledged them-

selves not to marry until the play is over. He owed his enthusiastic public—a large part of it feminine—his undivided attention. Finland's hour of crisis demanded his all from her Extraordinary Representative. It was not the moment to suggest that he had purely personal preoccupations. For Finland's sake he denied his engagement, and redoubled his social and official activities.

The Minister talked several times a day with Helsinki. When bad news came to him over the wire, he would hurry to the State Department and try to get some action before it was too late. Mr. Hull was kind and fatherly and consoling when the distressed Minister insisted that something must be done for the valiant Finns. He was genuinely upset after each visit and lamented to his advisors that he was powerless—there was the Neutrality Law. "It's really a shame," he said, after a moving interview with Procope, "Finland is such a *good* little country."

After a particularly trying conference, during which the distracted and hollow-eyed envoy actually became convulsed with sobs, and declared bitterly, "Everybody is letting Finland down in her hour of need," Secretary Hull stated that he would express to Moscow the willingness of the United States to offer her good offices in terminating the conflict.

A ten-million-dollar lollypop was offered also as consolation to the distressed and popular Procope. Warren Pierson, president of the Export-Import Bank, scraped up the remaining dimes from the 1939 credit in the coffers of the Bank. But it was stipulated that the consolation



prize must be spent for agricultural products in the United States. . . .

When President Roosevelt personally sent for the Finnish Minister to inform him that his country's honesty would be rewarded and told him that a ten-million-dollar loan for the purchase of food stuffs had been granted, Procope expressed his gratitude. But when he got back to the Legation, he burst out into an un-Nordic rage: "We don't need wheat, mush, and pigs at this time. What we need are guns, machine guns, and airplanes. And we can't make them out of sausage!" But by the next morning the indefatigable Procope was on the warpath again. He thought of various schemes by which the State Department could avoid the Neutrality red tape. He proposed that America lend Finland, through the R.F.C., copper and cotton which the Finns could swap in anti-communist Italy against the desperately needed armaments. Italy had already sent planes to Finland. She would send other war supplies if she could be paid in needed raw materials. But the canny legal experts of the Department saw through that one too. Secretary Hull had to answer, once more, that this would be an evasion of the Law, and that a Democracy could not afford to do such a thing.

An envoy is like an actor: the show must go on. The diplomatic role demands a smiling face, a confident manner, until the curtain falls. Cocktail parties, dinners, and receptions are all parts of traditional diplomatic life and cannot be abruptly cancelled for fear that the wrong conclusion might be drawn—by watchful friends and alert enemies. This tradition is a survival of the time

when communications were slow and when the expression on an envoy's face might change the current of history—when observers searched an Excellency's features instead of the daily press, for news. Procope continued the tradition. Even at the height of the war with Russia, he went on entertaining. He served his guests native dishes: immense platters of hors d'oeuvres and other Finnish delicacies. These were washed down with the fiery schnapps, which had to be thrown into the mouth in order to avoid burning the lips. The Minister took pains to demonstrate to his guests just how to drink it. "Don't sip it, don't taste it, just swallow it in one gulp—like this." Felix Morley, the then editor of the *Washington Post*, followed his example, rolled his eyes, and then walked out on the terrace to get a breath of fresh air. "I'm going to stick to Rhine wine after this," he told his friends later. Immediately following the drinking of the schnapps, enormous boiled potatoes were passed as a single course; the potatoes were blotters, designed to absorb the liquor and permit the guests to start all over again. After the potatoes, a full course meal was served. But there was an inevitable forced atmosphere throughout these wartime parties: the host would have to leave the table every once in a while to answer calls from Helsinki, where full course dinners had ceased to be served sometime ago.

The envoy went out to parties also, and listened to endless expressions of admiration for the magnificent Finns. He gracefully accepted the eulogies, but pointed out with increasing desperation that unless something concrete were done about it there would be no mag-

nificent people left in the world—only a lot of the other kind. . . .

Procope had a purpose in keeping up the social routine in spite of the press of other affairs. He was neglecting no chance, no matter how slim. In the haphazard American democracy, where no one seemed to have the authority to make a decision, who knew what contact, social or otherwise, might prove to be the jackstraw which would bring down the pile of obstacles between him and his Perfect Cause? Who knew what effect an amiable word from a society woman might have on a hesitating Senator? Procope multiplied himself: he was everywhere at once.

His military attaché, Col. Zilliacus, was haunting the War Department, begging for outmoded war implements, rifles, machine guns, carriageless field artillery, or what have you, left over from the last World War. He was always cordially received by his American brother officers and warmly congratulated upon the magnificent stand of the Finns. But the Secretary of War alone had the right to declare World War armaments outmoded or surplus, and isolationist Harry Woodring was adamant in his refusal to aid any warring country. The coveted guns remained in their boxes, or were sold to hunting clubs in the United States, and the Finnish Military Attaché had to content himself with the goodwill of his brother officers. Zilliacus was frequently joshed about the swell job Field Marshal Mannerheim and his handful of men were doing. One day in January, just after having talked to Helsinki, he rushed up to the War Department to see whether there was any indication of a loosening of

the gun situation. Col. Crane, liaison officer with the foreign military attachés, greeted him with the genial inquiry: "Why do you great big bullying Finns try to impose on little Soviet Russia?" Zilliacus answered ruefully: "That question would have seemed a whole lot funnier yesterday!"

Procope, who had been initiated into the A.B.C. of American politics by his newspaper friends, thought that he could count on one ace that other troubled diplomats did not possess: he hoped that the anti-communist Middle West, with its large proportion of Scandinavian settlers, might warm to the Nordic cause where it had remained cold to other European problems. Senate isolationists, taking the cue from their constituents, might be less adamant in Finland's case. And Congress did seriously consider the plight of the Finns. The Harrison-Pittman bill to permit flotation of an armament loan was proposed. Debates as to how far Finland could be helped without impairing the neutrality of the United States went on daily in both Houses, and even off the two floors. Senators Brown of Michigan and Wylie of Wisconsin heatedly debated the question of the Finnish loan before the ladies of the Women's National Press Club. Senator Brown defended the proposal. Senator Wylie expostulated that such a rash deed would certainly lead the United States straight into war. But America was not to be endangered by any rash congressional act in respect to Finland. The Mannerheim Line collapsed; the perfect case was ended, and the perfect cause was lost—to be revived again when the Nazis thrust into the hands of the Finns the guns for which they had been pleading.

The visits of condolence to the Finnish Legation began.

The Legation, a former beehive of activity, settled into a deathlike calm. The diligent Minister now spent his time trying to get wheat, lard and pigs for his starving countrymen; trying to keep before the American public the fact that though the white-clad warriors were no longer lying in the snow, the Finnish people for whom they had fought were alive and hungry. But the newsmen moved on with the world spotlight as it shifted from Finland's bloody and glorious stage to the fjords of Norway. Procope found it hard to get space in the daily press for stories about his countrymen's plight. He remarked bitterly, as Finnish affairs left the papers altogether: "I am no longer news." Like many another foreigner, he was finding America's combined hospitality, generosity, Yankee shrewdness and short memory a bit bewildering. The feminine contingent were the last of Finland's Washington rooters to desert. The relief groups continued to knit and to raise funds for the suffering Finns. Women understood that life must go on somehow. . . .

Then one day the picture of a charming English girl appeared in the Washington newspapers. She was the fiancée of Hjalmar Procope and was on her way to Washington to marry him.

Procopomania was over.



## VII

### JAPANESE SCREENS

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THE JAPANESE EMBASSY is a pretty sight in the spring. The pure white stucco building, a low one-winged structure, sits back upon the greenest of lawns. It fairly sparkles with freshness when the pink azaleas and the pale cherry trees bloom against the classic white of the walls. Nothing could look less mysterious than the home of the ambassadors of Emperor Hirohito, and yet quite a grim legend has grown up around it.

When the new Embassy was designed, a special dispatch room was included in the plans. Embassies keep their code books and confidential correspondence in safes, but the Japanese felt that they needed a special steel-walled room in which to guard their diplomatic secrets.

Savoring of the wildest detective stories is one rumor which has been built around the steel vault. It is said to contain row upon row of little square boxes full of deadly microbes. When "Der Tag" dawns and the Axis blow

falls, Washington will wake—so the story goes—to find its reservoir of drinking water polluted.

It's true that row upon row of little square boxes are in the mysterious room. They are made of red and blue lacquer—I saw them myself when Ambassador Horinouchi took me one day into the vault to show me its lethal contents. The envoy was grinning mischievously as he told me to open one of the containers—which I did with some trepidation. A lovely fragrance greeted my nostrils. I was smelling the very finest China tea, His Excellency told me. Horinouchi let a handful of the perfumed leaves drift through his fingers as he remarked: "You see what dangerous things this room contains!"

The rumor about strange doings in the Embassy gained momentum when a Japanese attaché's automobile was riddled with bullets during the night hours and the Embassy refused to allow a police investigation. Popular imagination places radio transmission and receiving sets in the basement, but no one knows what does go on there and no one will unless the Ambassador himself should choose one day to conduct a tour for the satisfaction of the curious. The Japanese Embassy, like all others, enjoys full diplomatic immunity and no one has the right, upon any authority, to step over the threshold without its occupant's permission. It is definitely known, however, that the cellar contains innumerable cases of sake—and a huge oil burner. Nippon's diplomats have held the latter responsible for the near-ruin of the fine lacquer and inlaid pieces which Tokio shipped to Washington when the new Embassy was ready. When the brittle objets d'art began to crack alarmingly they were sent back to their native

climate. There are reminders of Japanese culture, however, in the simple white-walled rooms. Priceless silk paintings hang in the entrance hall. In the corners of the drawing room fierce-looking Samurai warriors stand on guard. The ancient armored suits, complete with moustache and painted visor, look astonishingly lifelike. Exquisite gold screens, placed here and there, draw the light. The actual furniture, however, is pure Grand Rapids: electric blue, overstuffed plush chairs and sofas live in unblushing propinquity with the delicate art of Japan.

Nothing in the much discussed cellar could be half as dangerous as the innocent smiles of the Japanese when they entertained Washington officialdom in their incongruous drawing room. From Debuchi to Horinouchi, they would invariably open wide the Embassy doors after each new breach of treaty. The little men of Nippon would bow obsequiously as they offered a cup of the finest tea from China—watching carefully to see just how much reaction the latest tread on American toes was evoking in official circles.

Although Japan did not join the Axis until 1940, the activities of Japanese and Axis diplomats have fallen into curiously similar patterns for nearly a decade. Japanese, Italian and German envoys have all been busy telling America through the press, Congress, and the State Department that it would be most unkind to suspect their purity of intention—intelligent Americans should understand the needs of virile races, the necessity of *lebensraum* for growing countries. It was pointed out that to prevent legitimate expansion was impossible—to arm for



protection unnecessary. A surprising number of American policy framers have failed to be as suspicious of the appealing lullabies of Axis diplomats as they have of the entangling wiles of the envoys of the European democracies.

In spite of the unwitting help of the isolationists, Japanese diplomats have had a harder task of persuasion than either the Nazis or the Italians. Their field of expansion directly involved American interests from the very first, and they had to explore the sensitive spots cautiously, moving over them only when the reaction was sluggish enough to encourage more pressure. Ever since the Manchurian coup, Japan has had political analysts in Washington working with, but not officially attached to, the Embassy. These men did nothing more subversive than to read the Congressional Record and the curricula vitae of the political figures in the House and the Senate.

I had long talks with one of them and found to my amazement that he knew as much about American politics as the reporters who cover the "Hill." When I mentioned this to the Japanese military attaché, he grinned, and said: "Of course, we must know what your politicians are thinking. Every pacifist in your Congress means one destroyer less that poor Japan has to build." Then he added hastily: "Of course, we build only for defense!"

The contention of these analysts that America would remain apathetic to international changes was borne out when the worst political headache of the Japanese, Senator Hiram Johnson, became a leading isolationist. An amusing exchange about American Foreign Policy took place between the veteran Californian and a young New

Dealer. After a second cocktail the young man had the temerity to challenge the Senator on a statement that America was in no danger from any quarter: "Young man," said Hiram Johnson, "no one ever contradicts me! I was nominated by both parties in my State! When I say we're in no danger, we're in no danger!"

With the exception of Admiral Nomura, who was sent to Washington after Japan formally joined the Axis, the silken-mannered envoys of the Empire of the Rising Sun have been liberals or pacifists—who nevertheless carried out skillfully the orders of the military-dominated Foreign Office.

A liberal ambassador was in Washington when the Japanese walked into Manchuria in September, 1931. Katsuji Debuchi was not in the confidence of the military clique which dictated the coup, and he was as much surprised as the State Department. But the small Nipponese, a round little man whose moonlike face wore an expression of ineffable good nature, adjusted himself to the startling news with ease. Debuchi resembled amazingly his own fat-bellied God of Plenty, except for the dashing checked suits and elegant high-buttoned shoes he affected.

He was the first envoy to live in the new Embassy and the originator of the Japanese diplomatic technique of squeeze and smile—then squeeze a little more. He used it first in connection with the incident at Nonni Bridge. When Japan occupied Mukden, Secretary of State Stimson protested the breach of the Nine Power Pact and the Japanese solemnly assured us, through their envoy, that

there would be no more fighting. Just a month later they attacked a Chinese Army under General Mah. Secretary Stimson sent for the Ambassador and dressed him down. Debuchi hurried back to the Chancery and telephoned a number of newspapermen inviting them to call at ten o'clock next morning to hear the true story of the Nonni Bridge incident. His round face was wreathed in smiles as the representatives of the press filed into his study. The room had been furnished according to Debuchi's idea of the proper setting for an envoy of modern Japan: There were bright red leather armchairs and a large sofa; tall metal stands held novelty ashtrays of a new self-emptying variety. A large and very shiny cuspidor sat near the imposing desk. From the walls a number of exquisite Japanese prints made a modest bid for attention. The Ambassador looked as pleased as a small boy at his birthday party—he intended to make the press conference a festive occasion. Shortly after his arrival in America, Debuchi had decided that the cocktail was the thing. He provided himself with a half-gallon shaker and was always ready to offer dry martinis to his guests. Debuchi himself could down six of them at a sitting and show no sign of heightened reaction except that his cheerful giggle would become a trifle hilarious. In spite of the early hour he began to press cocktails upon the group which had gathered in his study. Without batting an eyelid His Excellency gave the example by downing four helpings from the enormous shaker. Between each gulp he insisted to the reluctant newsmen that dry martinis were just the right “pick you up.”

“You see,” he sucked in his breath with glee, as they

continued to look doubtful, "Japanese are so much stronger than Americans!" One of the reporters got to the business of the day and queried: "What about the war in Manchuria?" "War? What war? There is no war in Manchuria! That Chinese brigand, General Mah, was trying to keep the poor Manchurian farmers from crossing Nonni Bridge with their loads of soya beans. So our army fixed Mah. Somebody has to keep bandits in order. The United States can't do that in the Far East!"

So severe had been Secretary Stimson's rebukes, however, that Debuchi did not dismiss them as lightly as he did General Mah. He was not sufficiently acquainted with the American political set-up to know that a scolding from the Secretary of State of the pacifist President Hoover must be purely academic. After Stimson's warning, Debuchi dutifully reported to his government that the mighty United States would act if things got too tense in the Far East. By this time, however, the military clique had acquired a strong position in Japanese politics and it pushed Japan further into Manchuria. Nothing happened to bear out Debuchi's interpretation of the American attitude about the breach of the Nine Power Pact—he lost face and was recalled to Tokio. Like the well-meaning Italian Ambassador de Martino, he was sent to heaven without having his head chopped off. The Emperor made his rotund and jovial envoy a member of the House of Peers. Debuchi exchanged the tight checked suit for the Peer's black kimono, with its comfortable purple sash, and busied himself with making speeches on child welfare.

Debuchi's successor, the pacifist Saito, was tolerated by the strong men of Japan although he had not been picked by them. They had acquiesced to the Foreign Office program of dispensing diplomatic bromides while military preparations were crystallizing.

Hiroshi Saito arrived in Washington with a charming wife, a relative of the Imperial Prince Chichibu, and two small children. Gentle Madame Saito and the two little almond-eyed dolls became well known to the Washington public through the rotogravure sections of the newspapers. When the first cherry tree would blush against the pale Washington sky, three tiny kimono-clad figures would invariably pose underneath the blossoms which symbolized Japanese-American friendship.

The new envoy was the physical antithesis of Debuchi. He had the thin, ascetic face of a medieval monk. His large hollow eyes were almost feverishly brilliant, and unlike so many Japanese eyes, they did not appear to have smoked glass behind the iris. Saito was far from the typically impassive Oriental; his face mirrored his emotions almost as readily as the undisciplined features of Westerners. He could look confused, embarrassed, and very sorrowful.

As Japanese-American relations worsened, the frail Saito's face lengthened with anxiety. After the Panay incident he became so thin and melancholic that he could have been drawn with a single, drooping line. Saito liked Washington; its peaceful atmosphere suited his quiet nature. His Embassy was just a stone's throw from a lovely wooded park in which he liked to wander. He became fond of America and American ways, and for a while was

able to nourish a dream of friendship between the two countries whose shores were washed by the same waters.

The Saitos entertained often and lavishly, and soon the new envoy had a large circle of friends. Madame Saito was the only woman of the Japanese Embassy who ever became a part of Washington's social life. The women have usually been conspicuous by their absence. The assistant military and naval attachés are even forbidden to bring their wives to America, on the theory that women are cumbersome pieces of luggage. A Japanese diplomat's wife, when she appeared at all, was an exquisite kimono, a trained smile and a bow.

Both the Saitos found sympathetic souls in Washington, and they carefully nursed along their first groping friendships with those little courtesies and charming gestures of which the Japanese make a delicate art. Madame Saito sought out the wives of American officers who had been stationed in Japan. Saito tried to reach as many sections of official Washington as he possibly could, never overlooking an indication of sympathy for, or even a sign of curiosity about Japan and things Japanese. He seized every opportunity to present to Americans the delicate Japan of Lafcadio Hearn—the mixture of "silk embroidery and soul."

When the well-known "Madame Butterfly," Takami Miura, came to Washington to sing, the Saitos invited several hundred people. The opera star was one of the celebrated beauties of Japan, and that night Madame Miura was a lovely sight according to any standard. She wore a pale grey kimono embroidered with purple iris, and had a scarlet-lined sash around her tiny waist. She

sang "o-Sake songs," salty little tales set to music which delight Japanese gentlemen after they have dined well, temporarily disposed of politics and begun to enjoy the evening. . . . The star obligingly translated each song into clipped pure English as she finished. Whenever she reached a phrase which she considered untranslatable she would roll her eyes, smile, and murmur: "Oh, well, you know what I mean!" There was the story of the handsome young fisherman who left his sad little wife behind him and sailed away . . . to fish? To listen to a beautiful Japanese woman sing the tinkling exotic notes and then to hear her translate them into familiar thought patterns for a sophisticated audience was highly diverting. When she melted into a modest bow after each number, Madame Miura looked exactly like one of the millions of her sisters who live in a state of soft self-effacement. But as she sang she radiated magnetism and charm and the audience responded enthusiastically.

Miura had more talents than one: she displayed a most amazing knowledge of the background of people upon whom she had never laid eyes until that evening. After the music was over and groups had begun to gather around the buffet and champagne bar, an attaché conveyed the vivid little figure around the room. Her progress was interrupted by a series of delighted recognitions of distinguished guests. As the attaché named each person the prima donna spoke her little piece. To Captain Baggaley, Assistant Director of Naval Intelligence: "Oh, Captain Baggaley, the brilliant, handsome naval officer. Of course. I am so pleased!" To Rex Tugwell, famous Brain Truster: "Not the man who knows everything in

the world? What a pleasure!" Before the symbol of Supreme Justice, the dignified Harlan Fiske Stone, a reverent bow so deep, so low, that the long pins thrust through the pillows of lacquered hair nearly touched the floor. Though it was obvious that an attaché had spent a busy afternoon coaching Miura, no one in the least allergic to charm and beauty could have failed to be pleased.

Saito, a happy expression on his face, was watching the triumphant progress of the prima donna from the corner of the room.

It was March, 1936. Saito was being interviewed in the study which had been shorn of the red leather furniture and done over in sober dark green. The newest regulations for Manchuria, demanding that all American business transactions in that area pass through Japanese hands, had created quite a sensation in Washington. Saito's interviewer asked him: "Suppose we simply refuse to pay any attention to the regulations? What then?" The Ambassador looked acutely unhappy and stammered: "Japan would consider it an unfriendly act with all that that implies!" It was the first time that Tokio had actually raised the war signal when American and Japanese interests clashed, and poor peace-loving Saito had to do the flag waving. Saito, who had spent his time cultivating the delicate plant of Japanese-American friendship, had been ordered to toughen up henceforth in his contacts with American officials; to start pressing on the sensitive spots so that Tokio could judge by the loudness of the squeal whether it was safe to move further along.



Saito began to be less open in his manner. He fancied that all his American friends were turning against him. A shade less cordiality in a greeting would prey on his mind, and he became shy and retiring. The story was circulating in Japan that he had become genuinely pro-American and was apologizing for the Tokio-dictated jabs before he made them, thus failing to provide a true record of the curve of American reaction to Japanese policies. The Foreign Office suspected he was not the accurate sounding-board that he should be. The Embassy acquired a Counsellor whose job it was to put punch into Japanese diplomacy and then check up on the results. Husky, perpetually grinning, Takichira Suma looked like a wrestler or a jiu-jitsu instructor. He had not been in the Embassy a week before everything was completely under his control. He took charge of all but the most official contacts with the State Department, and even wrote Saito's reports, although he permitted his chief to sign them. The Ambassador's principal duty, henceforth, was to appear in a high silk hat on ceremonial occasions and to be host for a drastically revised list of American guests.

Though Suma censored Saito's list of friends, he did not cut down on Embassy entertaining. On the contrary, after his arrival Japanese naval and military attachés started in to entertain most extensively. They gave cocktail parties for the other military attachés, and for American service men and their wives. There were intimate sukiyaki dinners for men alone. Joviality was the order of the day at these parties—the kind of back-slapping familiarity which they thought the American officers expected. The Japanese diplomats, however, had not yet

begun to put their feet on the sofa in the presence of feminine guests or to lay their hands familiarly on American women. I saw that occur at a tea party sometime after the undressing of English women in front of coolies in Tientsin. Few Occidentals understood the psychological importance of that gesture. Japanese women are not permitted to expose their shoulders or arms in public. A Japanese will not lay his garment in the same chest with his wife's clothes. It is not respectful to womankind—to the mothers of the race. When Japanese soldiers undressed white women in Tientsin with impunity the white race lost face in the Orient.

In Saito's time the attachés were still content to thump their male guests heartily. After a number of cocktails they would become expansively talkative and suggest to their American colleagues that America wouldn't go to war. I heard one of the assistant naval attachés say to a high ranking American officer: "You got good navy, we know American Navy is good. But American people don't like war." In the meantime he was watching his listener's face intently. The American sailor looked good-naturedly non-committal and the little Nipponese added in a slightly anxious voice: "Japan America good friends! We always be good friends: No?"

The number of Japanese attachés of the armed services multiplied. Soon the Japanese had ten of them to the three of the British and French. They were as active as squirrels, scampering about, trying to find out what was really going on in the Capital of their most feared neighbor. The acorns to be picked up in social Washington were not of paramount importance, but the industrious

Japanese were neglecting nothing. The wives of naval officers were politely questioned about their husbands' activities. I was standing with a navy wife when a Japanese naval attaché approached us. "How does the commander like his job? He is very busy Naval Intelligence: No?" My friend, who had been in the Far East, replied that her husband, reputedly the handsomest man in the service, was quite happy. "What his specialty?" persisted the little Nipponese. "Women," shot back the Intelligence Officer's wife. Later her husband heard that the Japanese assistant attaché had reported to his chief that this particular American officer was in charge of a service in the Navy Department dealing with feminine spies!

The Panay was sunk. The melancholic Saito was shocked beyond description. He listened, more hollow-eyed than ever, to the sharply worded protest of Secretary Hull. Feeling ran high in Washington and the Embassy parties were boycotted by indignant matrons for at least six months. A boycott of Japanese goods was started. Soft-spoken, idealistic Mrs. Justice Brandeis was the leading figure in the group. She tried to interest wives of Administration officials, Senators and Representatives, in the plan to stop Japan by cutting off the supply of American dollars. Washington women were horrified at the Panay incident and at the tales of Japanese atrocities in China—but few of them were horrified enough to wear unbecoming lisle or heavy rayon stockings in place of those made from the gossamer silk of Japan. . . .

Saito was wasting visibly away. He had already been isolated from his personal friends by the watchful Suma. The general mass of officials did not bother to distinguish

between the Ambassador's predilection for peace and friendship and his country's war-like attitude. When he appeared at formal receptions he was shunned or snubbed by American officials and French and British diplomats. He became almost wraith-like and finally took to his bed.

The last time I saw him he was driving away from the Soviet Embassy. He and Madame Saito were peering out of their limousine at the little group of guests on the Embassy steps who were still waiting for their cars to pick them up. Not one among the dozen people standing there appeared to see the Japanese, and Saito was the picture of despondency as he looked for a friendly greeting. I smiled and bowed. The little man almost fell out of his car to return my bow and his face lit up with a smile.

That was Saito's last public appearance. He became so ill that he was confined to the Embassy. His successor was appointed and the dispossessed envoy and his family moved to a hotel, where he took almost immediately to his bed and slowly drifted out of life.

During his illness Madame Saito continued to see a few American women friends. In spite of her sorrow over her husband's condition, she scrupulously carried out all the little ceremonial gestures of greeting and farewell which are prescribed by Japanese rules of politeness. She allowed her self-discipline to relax enough, however, to say that her husband was dying not only of his malady but of a broken heart. . . .

In September, 1938, Tokio had threatened to blow the United States Navy off the high seas if the Government

dared fortify the Island of Guam. The reaction of the American press and Congress had been one of indignation rather than of fear, so another pacifist ambassador was sent to Washington. The new envoy was a member of the Oxford Group and described himself as a "Christian Pacifist." Lean, dapper Kensuke Horinouchi had a high intellectual brow and a very soft voice. He adopted the politely explanatory method of describing Japanese policies. Horinouchi suggested that it was the unsympathetic attitude of the Western Powers to Japan's problems which had led his country to "reluctantly adopt the present policy of politely acquiring necessary space." He was fond of quoting from the bible and he used a text from Matthew to illustrate the point: "For whosoever hath to him shall be given and he shall have abundance. But whosoever hath not from him shall be taken away even that which he hath." Such sweet reasonableness was very disarming.

Japanese Foreign Policy at this time was like a horse which is coaxed to cross a shaky bridge, spurred by the military boot. It could only go on, but every now and then it paused to feel out the ground ahead.

In the summer of 1939 the State Department demanded that Tokio explain the rough treatment of American citizens in China. Weeks went by with no answer from the Foreign Office. In September, Horinouchi called at the State Department and began a little speech so politely that Secretary Hull became worried: he was afraid that another American gunboat had been sunk by the Japanese in the Far East. But the Ambassador had good news this time. He was "hurrying," he said, to bring

Tokio's reply to the American note. The sudden hurry occurred just after the Communist-Nazi alliance secured Russia's western frontier. Russia was now free to concentrate on Far Eastern problems and His Excellency was most earnest about the Red menace. He intimated that Great Britain, the United States, and Japan should cooperate in a Christian spirit to curb the U.S.S.R. As a token of goodwill Horinouchi imparted the information that a Japanese sentry who had slapped an American had been sent back to Japan and given three years at hard labor. But the State Department must keep this information strictly confidential, warned Horinouchi, lest the Japanese Military be humiliated if it were made public. . . .

Horinouchi decided that the Panay incident had been forgotten and that it was time to re-open the Japanese Embassy to Washington society. Of late, very few cards had been left at that door and invitations to dinner were being accepted by Washington officials only on the cook's night out.

Horinouchi engaged a social secretary who had lived in Washington all her life and who was respected and liked in all quarters. She made up lists for receptions and dinner parties, and followed up the invitations by 'phone calls to explain to her friends that Horinouchi did not belong to the war-mongers, but was a peace-loving, polished, and cultured gentleman—which was true. For her sake many people who had been boycotting the Japanese went to the Embassy once more.

Horinouchi had chosen his moment well. Feeling was less high by this time. The rape of Poland had made the

Japanese aggression in China seem almost civilized by comparison. The China incident was beginning to be a more or less static affair: so why get excited about it? The drawing room of the Japanese Embassy began to fill up again. Horinouchi was host and hostess at the same time. Madame Horinouchi was non-existent according to western standards. Though she stood obediently beside her husband when he received their guests, her smile was as mechanical as a traffic signal. The other women of the Embassy stood decoratively in corners, bowing in a startled fashion when one of the American guests glanced in their direction.

Horinouchi was equal to the task. He was the soul of courtesy. He even bowed to the now widely neglected European protocol concerning diplomats of belligerent powers—representatives of countries at war are not supposed to recognize each other after the outbreak of hostilities. Colleagues who have been warm friends on Tuesday must look blank when they see each other on Wednesday if their respective countries have gone to war during the night.

In 1915 America had as her Minister to Rumania a Mr. Charles Vopicka, a beer baron who had been given the Legation as a political plum. He scandalized the capitals of Europe by inviting French, English, German, Serbian, Bulgarian and Russian diplomats to a dinner party at the American Legation. The optimistic Vopicka cherished the illusion that he could bring about peace by inviting the representatives to "talk it over" on neutral territory. The dinner was set for 8:15 and the guests began to arrive. By 8:35 they had all come, looked around the room

and gone home again. The Minister and his staff of three sat down to a table set for forty. The story of Vopicka's ill-advised party was circulated throughout Europe as proof of the boorishness of Americans. Career men quoted it as an example of the folly of appointing untrained men to diplomatic posts. Neutral diplomats in Washington have been guilty of the same "boorishness" since the outbreak of the Second World War. They have disregarded the old protocol during the past two years, but their motive was different from that of the good-natured Vopicka. They were following the new technique of appeasing the Nazis—even at their cocktail parties.

The envoys of the small European countries which were waiting to be gobbled by the Axis, and the heads of Central and South American Missions who had to reckon with totalitarian influences at home, were extremely cautious not to offend Nazi diplomats by leaving them out of a reception. They mixed German, Italian, British and French representatives at parties after the declaration of war, leaving it up to their guests to avoid hostile colleagues. More than once I have seen a Britisher suddenly become absorbed in a picture on the wall when a German attaché walked into the room. The situation was easier for diplomats' wives—a woman could fail to see an "enemy" by engaging in a minute examination of a 1939 version of a hat.

Horinouchi would have none of this friction in his drawing-room. He scrupulously segregated the staffs of the embassies whose countries were at war. When I commented on the fact that he was the only neutral diplomat in Washington who was following the old rule he smiled



and said: "I do not intend to have the Japanese Embassy turned into a battleground for the diplomats of Europe!"

Polite Japanese diplomatists were fishing delicately for the best prize in the international grab-bag. They were courting French and British officials on Tuesday, giving cocktails to the Axis on Wednesday. In the meantime, military missions were going out from Tokio to look over the real assets of the warring powers.

In October of 1939 a former Secretary of War and erstwhile Commander of the Japanese forces in North China paid a visit to Washington. General Terauchi and his party of military aides came straight from Germany, where they had gone to attend the Nuremberg party festival. The Fuehrer was away on an excursion to Poland when they arrived in Germany and the festival was called off. The high-ranking Japanese were taken through Nazi war factories and on a trip to the Siegfried Line as a compensation. General George Marshall gave a cocktail party in honor of the visitors. The Japanese officers were so full of German war might that they could talk of nothing else. They expatiated to every American officer present upon the superiority of the Nazi machine. Finally Terauchi announced to his host that in his opinion Germany simply couldn't be defeated by any combination of Powers. The Chief of Staff answered with a twinkle in his eye, as he politely offered the Japanese Commander another cocktail: "There is no unbeatable country, General, not even yours!"

Horinouchi's recall was not far in the distance. President Roosevelt refused to sign a new trade agreement

with Japan after January, 1940, and decreed that business on a day-to-day basis was good enough. Horinouchi called at the State Department and declared that the military clique would be very angry with the United States and would start shooting up Tientsin, Shanghai, and Nanking. Mr. Roosevelt refused to be intimidated, and Japan gracefully turned her fan around to show the picture on the other side. Tokio suggested sending a goodwill mission to Washington. Horinouchi warned his Foreign Office that the irritation of the American Government would make such a mission a complete failure. The little mild pale-yellow envoy (he was the color of old silk) was caught between two rollers. The Foreign Office blamed him for talking too loudly to the State Department and the military blamed him for not talking loud enough. Early in the fall of 1940 he was removed in an unprecedented manner. Tokio, at this point, was unable to decide what type of representation to have in Washington, but was reluctant to offend the American Government by leaving the post unfilled. The Japanese Government adopted an elegant solution—all heads of missions in the Western Hemisphere, except the Ambassadors to Brazil and The Argentine, were recalled and *chargés d'affaires* were left in command. The Foreign Office explained confidentially to Ambassador Grew that Japan was a poor country and that military expenses were so heavy she could no longer keep up embassies in this Hemisphere. *Chargés d'affaires* were much cheaper and consequently it had been decided not to send an ambassador in the place of the Christian pacifist Horinouchi.

American Ambassador Grew dutifully reported Tokio's

explanations and added his own: the leaders of the Empire of the Rising Sun did not quite know where they stood in the new world set-up, and until they had definitely decided they preferred to have only an informal representation in Washington. A chargé d'affaires possesses other advantages besides the one of economy—he is a mere mouthpiece, while an ambassador has to express moods and opinions and offer interpretations. During the period of incubation of a definite policy, the Foreign Office preferred a mouthpiece. France fell and Tokio saw more clearly the shape of things to come. Berlin, through the Vichy set-up, in October, 1940, paid Japan the first installment for complete cooperation with the Axis. The Indo-Chinese forces were forbidden by Vichy to resist the Japanese, and Tokio was able to establish her first bases in Hanoi and Haiphong—a preparation for the 1941 invasion of Indo-China. After this first payoff the military clique decided to throw Japan's lot in with the Axis and Admiral Nomura was sent to Washington as Emperor Hirohito's envoy.

The new Ambassador has two advantages—he is tough, but he doesn't look it. Nomura can be trusted to grin as blandly as any of Tokio's pacifist envoys, but the military men know that when the time comes he can talk as big as he is required to. Nomura is like one of those soldier-ecclesiastics of the Middle Ages who wore a cassock over the armored suit and had a sword hidden in the folds of a Bishop's cloak. He speaks fluent English, having studied at Annapolis with the young midshipmen who are now high-ranking naval officers. When Franklin Roosevelt was Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Captain Nomura

was naval attaché in Washington, and the two men more than once swapped stories of an evening over highballs and a platter of sandwiches. Nomura arrived in Washington and presented his credentials to the President without much delay. Contrary to his expectations, Mr. Roosevelt was not as informal and talkative as the sailor diplomat had expected him to be. After the official exchange of speeches Nomura lingered and attempted to reminisce, but the President cut him short about the good old days with a few remarks about the unfortunate present. The audience was ended.

Perhaps the President was familiar with Nomura's now famous dissertation made in 1932 when he passed through Washington and looked up some old friends in the American Navy. A stag party was arranged for him. Everybody had several highballs and the usual diplomatic circumlocutions were forgotten for the evening. The question of a conflict between Japan and the United States was frankly broached by one of the Americans present. Nomura stated flatly: "There will be no war!" "Why do you think that, Admiral?" "Because of beauty-rest mattresses!" Nomura grinned. "What do you mean by that?" asked the astonished American. "I will tell you," said Nomura, carefully biting off his words. "You people are happy, you have radios, automobiles, big beefsteaks, chicken, beauty-rest mattresses. When you have these things you don't want to fight. Why should your men want to sleep in hammocks on warships, or lie in trenches, when life is so pretty at home? Japan is different—the Japanese has uncertain handful of rice to eat—in army or navy his rice is sure. The hammock on the warship is

better than the thin straw mat at home. You Americans were fighters when you were building your empire—when you had to kill Indians for a plot of ground on which to grow food. Now you are like a tiger whose stomach is full, you are sleepy!”

Twenty years ago the old Emperor, Yoshihito, sent President Taft the famous cherry trees which would symbolize with each blooming the perennial quality of Japanese-American friendship.

In the spring of 1941, for the first time in twenty years, no kimono-clad figure from the Japanese Embassy posed beneath the blossom-laden boughs.



## VIII

### THE FIFTH COLONNA

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"NOW LOOK SHARP, ladies, this is the beginning of the Embassies. A unique feature of the Capital of the United States. On your right is the Spanish Embassy. That beautiful building houses the personal representative of the King of Spain. He is a real Count—the genuine article—and lives in that very house with his wife and children. Our B tour includes a visit to that diplomatic monument. On your left is the Polish Embassy. If any of you know somebody in Congress who will give you a letter of introduction, you will be able to visit the Ambassador. He is an old bachelor and keeps very much to himself. And now for the feature of today, ladies. On your left is the Eytalian Embassy which you will be privileged to enter. Our organization makes a specialty of getting you into one of the most beautiful buildings in Washington. It's a regular trip to Italy without crossing the ocean. You will be received by the wife of the Ambassador herself and

refreshments have been provided for you."

The sightseers jumped out of the bus and trooped up to the wrought iron doors of the Italian Embassy, a look of pleased anticipation on their faces.

It was a Friday afternoon, in the late spring of 1930, and Donna Antoinetta de Martino, the wife of Signor Giacomo de Martino, officially the Ambassador Extraordinary and Envoy Plenipotentiary of H. M. King Victor Emmanuel III of Italy, actually Signor Mussolini's megaphone in Washington, was at home. Following the custom of the Diplomatic Corps, Donna Antoinetta received callers every Friday afternoon during the "Season." On this particular Friday, her salons were sprinkled with Senators' wives, a Cabinet lady, and a number of women from local society. When the thirty-odd sightseers entered her drawing-room in a group, the Ambassadors lifted her lorgnette to her eyes and approached the newcomers. The barker of the tour had prudently remained outside after waving the last of his fares through the doorway.

When the Ambassadors was near enough to get a good look at the foremost tourist she knew what she was in for. It had already happened twice that season, but she was helpless. It had been announced in the society columns of the Washington papers, which were evidently perused carefully by the Cosmos Sight Seeing Tours, that the Italian Embassy would be open to Washington society on that afternoon.

But if a bus-load of sightseers was catapulted into the salon, Donna Antoinetta could hardly ask them to leave. Stories might appear in the newspapers about the snob-

bish discourtesy of the Italian Embassy. Some in the group may have been Italian-born and one of the duties of an Italian ambassador was to keep alive the tie between Italy and American citizens of Italian origin. Signora de Martino included the whole group in one large gesture and said: "Thank you for coming! The dining-room is just ahead of you." The hungry tourists, quite unawed by the usually intimidating lorgnette of the Ambassadress, trooped into the dining-room.

The de Martinos were the last of Mussolini's old-school ambassadors. A long career in conventional pre-war diplomacy in which the accent was on good manners and ceremonial forms, had ill-prepared the couple for the changes in the post-war world. They watched with wonder and a touch of pain the number of upstarts who were attaining important positions in government everywhere. They believed that social order was best which, in becoming crystallized, held each caste in its place as it hardened, like flies stuck in amber. Their aversion to the new era of social ebullition did not prevent them, however, from gracefully adapting themselves to their own changing Italy.

In his lapel His Excellency wore a conspicuous fascist emblem. The Roman fasces on the red-white-green background was enthusiastically larger than the officially prescribed badge. A huge, particularly chinny portrait of Mussolini held one of the places of honor in the main reception room of the Embassy. Il Duce's portrait and the wistful face of Victor Emmanuel occupied the foreground of the Florentine table. Behind them were ranged the countenances and beribboned chests of the other



members of the Royal family, including Prince Umberto, the heir to the throne.

Beyond the pugnacious countenance of Italy's dictator, nothing in the Italian Embassy suggested the new order. The very stones of the building had the patina of age. All the building materials had been brought to the United States from Italy under a special license from the State Department. The Italian Embassy is certainly the largest item which ever came into Washington duty-free. The marble for the staircase was quarried at Carrara, the woodwork and paneling had been carved by hands centuries dead. The door handles and knobs are XVIth century Florentine. The rough cold stones of the drawing-room walls absorb the light except the rays which settle into the jewel-like colors of the genuine Italian masters hanging here and there. There are two large Botticellis: the other paintings are less well known to the layman, but are considered gems by experts. The main living-room is about as large as the famous office of Signor Mussolini at the Palazzo Venezia. It opens into a patio which is a copy of the cloister of one of Italy's famous monasteries. The covered archways of the square patio lead into a garden centering on a small pool. The original plan included statuary for both garden and pool, but the figures never arrived. Perhaps the gentleman in charge of Italy's treasures thought he had gone far enough when he allowed two Botticellis to cross the Atlantic Ocean; or perhaps the explanation of an Italian attaché is correct: "Che," he shrugged his shoulders, "we Italians never quite finish anything!" The marble nymph never arrived to take up her abode in the pool: It remained uninhabited

except for a few gold-fish who gave up the struggle for existence after the de Martino cat appeared at the Embassy. It was a dream-like spot on a warm evening, when, hung with star-shaped lanterns, it invited embassy guests to stroll from the ballroom into the night air.

Into this XVIIth century setting Donna Antoinetta fitted as harmoniously as the old masters on the walls. At the age of 55 she was erect, a trifle forbidding, but had unmistakable traces of an earlier beauty which her photograph on a red velvet mat in a silver frame amply corroborated. She was admired by the Embassy staff, but not one among them felt really free in her presence, and no one among her large circle of acquaintances in Washington ever achieved sufficient intimacy to call her by her first name. That other "grande dame" of the Diplomatic Corps, Lady Lindsay, was called Elizabeth by a group of friends. American-born Elizabeth Lindsay's diamond-chained lorgnette failed to produce the intimidating effect achieved by Donna Antoinetta when she peered through her old-fashioned gold *face-à-main* with a "who are you and why are you here?" air.

In the happy era of the de Martinos, the discussion raging in the Diplomatic Corps centered around the question: "Is Donna Antoinetta really nearsighted, or does she enjoy watching her guests shrink slowly into the floor when she focuses them with her lorgnette?" The discussion acquired an added flavor of piquancy when the background of the Ambassadress was brought into the debate. There was a story that her beautiful eyes had once inflamed the youth of Rome. Had she adopted the lorgnette in that era as a screen for her too dangerous

eyes, or was it the freezing answer to the whispers of a naughty world? No one knew. She moved through life with grace and dignity until the naughty whispers became a charming legend, the fragrance of a *fin-de-siècle* romance clinging to her sweeping skirts.

By the time the de Martinos were appointed to Washington, the very presence of the Ambassadress was a guarantee of all the proprieties. The years tumbled by and Donna Antoinetta preferred to ignore their impertinent haste. Not only did she refuse to live in the second quarter of the XXth century, but she insisted that her guests of all ages conform to the manners of a dead era.

So commanding was her gesture towards the past that even the very young complied.

In the decade when young girls carried flasks to parties and young men preferred to dance with uncorseted misses, Donna Antoinetta revived the formal five-figured quadrille at the yearly embassy ball. The military attaché of the Embassy, Col. Pennaroli, an honorary aide-de-camp to the King of Italy, was chosen to command the dancers. He would lead the kid-gloved gentlemen through the formal figures of the quadrille while the lady guest of honor advanced and retreated at the head of her line. For weeks before the event, the Italian colonel would drill a special string orchestra in the outmoded tunes of the old dance. Expensive and exquisite favors, imported from England, were distributed during the evening.

Donna Antoinetta had definite ideas about the proper conduct of young society women. The waiters, powdered and rouged, with red and gold embroidered coats and

satin kneebreeches, would present trays of champagne and orangeade to the feminine sex. The whisky bars were open to the male guests only. A few brave females who dared move towards the masculine bars were frozen in their tracks at a sudden gesture in their direction of the Ambassador's watchful lorgnette.

Donna Antoinetta's insistence upon form on the part of young women was born of a love of all that went with the old suave existence of pre-war Europe, and not of the practical foresight of a mother with a marriageable daughter. Childless herself, she insisted that other women's daughters conform to her edicts. There was no rebellion—her old-fashioned parties became the chic events of the social season. Invitations were eagerly sought and discriminately dispensed. The young people willingly did without a jazz band and a flask for the privilege of assisting at Donna Antoinetta's elaborate excursions into the past.

Diminutive, excitable Signor Giacomo de Martino was a perpetual exclamation point in his wife's slow moving book of life. Half the size of the stately Ambassador, the envoy was generally in the midst of a large gesticulation about the incomprehensible United States. Once in a while Donna Antoinetta would give him a sidelong glance from her inscrutable eyes; his arms would drop abruptly to his side and he would hurry into his office to attend to important business. There was never any business so important, however, that he could not leave if an attaché pronounced the magic words: "Donna Antoinetta wishes to see you, Eccellenza."

Everything that affected Italy was of vital, even emo-

tional concern to Il Duce's first ambassador to the United States. He protested violently to a Washington editorial writer who mentioned the "four great powers" in the following order: "United States, Britain, France and Italy." His Excellency would, of course, swallow the United States, he would manage to gulp down England, but France ahead of Italy . . . never!

De Martino's readiness to concede to the United States the first place in the list of great powers was not entirely due to diplomatic courtesy. Mussolini was looking for moral and economic support from the United States and from the prosperous Italo-American population. Hitler's star had not yet risen; bad blood had existed between Italy and France since the end of the war, when Clemenceau had fought Orlando's claims to a larger share of the spoils. The London Naval Conference, in 1930, had been the occasion for another running spat between the two Latin countries. During the first years of his regime Mussolini could look only towards Britain and the United States for diplomatic cooperation.

While society was flocking masochistically to Donna Antoinetta's salon to undergo the "ordeal by lorgnette"—the Ambassadors seldom consented to go out, insisting that Washington come to her—the Ambassador was not having so easy a time in the Chancery.

For one thing, His Excellency was having trouble with the unruly Washington press. The newspapermen had not taken kindly to Fascismo. Mussolini's punitive castor oil created a greater stir than Hitler's subsequent wholesale murders. America was not yet conditioned to a philosophical acceptance of violence. Il Duce, a former scribe,

did not underestimate the value of the press in his campaign for Italo-American friendship. He instructed de Martino to pay particular attention to the newspaper fraternity. The Ambassador made a point of asking journalists to lunch with him at the Embassy. He paid particular attention to those who showed signs of real virulence against the New Regime. A newspaperman who had just made an attack on Il Duce would receive a phone call from the Italian Ambassador. Wouldn't the journalist care to hear the other side of the story over a bottle of Chianti? Many of them would, and after a very good lunch, they would be subjected to a barrage of expostulations, explanations and cajoleries from the earnest, excited little envoy.

These gatherings were never attended by Donna Antoinetta. Her role in Washington was purely social and she intended to make it clear that "lunch with the press" was a business and not a social function. At one of these luncheons, the Ambassador hinted to one of the more sympathetic newsmen that it would be an act of international cooperation if Signor Mussolini were proposed for associate membership in the National Press Club. He explained that Il Duce, now the head of the Italian Government, was still very proud of his old profession. It was agreed that Mussolini's name should be presented to the Board of Governors. De Martino jubilantly cabled Il Duce that he had paved the way for a new era in Italo-American relations and Mussolini graciously consented to have his name put up at the Press Club. He was black-balled! It must have been quite a shock, but Berlin was not yet directing Fascist propaganda and Il Duce chose

to show up an amiable forgivingness toward the American press for the slight. He continued to receive American newspapermen who visited Rome. The Ministry of Propaganda instructed de Martino to see to it that members of the embassy staff never set foot again in that particular club, but to maintain cordial relations with American journalists. The Ambassador, however, found it hard to forget that the newspapermen had placed him in a false position, and his personal contacts with them became less frequent. He now spent most of his time in the Chancery, scanning the daily papers.

The old-fashioned method of keeping informed of public opinion trends in America was still in use in the Embassy Chancery when the Ambassador arrived. One attaché was spending his whole time between luncheons, siestas, cocktail parties and dances cutting out articles which appeared in the dailies of large American cities. De Martino, under pressure from Rome, discovered a more efficient method of keeping up with the press. He subscribed to a clipping bureau which sent him every item that appeared in any American publication concerning Italy. Though most of the articles were expressions of disapproval of Il Duce and the Fascist regime, de Martino obediently waded through the miles of print, culling here and there a favorable item to cable to the Ministry of Propaganda in Rome. De Martino's usual consolation after a weekly dose of indigestion, for which he was paying the clipping bureau a round sum, was to go to the State Department and protest against the unfairness of the American press towards Mussolini. His visits became so much a matter of State Department routine that vari-

ous officials took turns in watching the Italian Ambassador's gesticulations and in soothing his exacerbated nerves. "The American press is free" the inevitable reply would run. "You must not pay so much attention, Your Excellency; it is forgotten as soon as it is read." To this the distracted de Martino would reply with a sigh: "It is not forgotten in Rome!"

One day, while occupied with his melancholic task of finding out what new devilment American journalists were up to, and in the midst of methodically preparing another protest about the cartoonists who were taking a fiendish pleasure in distorting Il Duce's physiognomy, de Martino's eyes lighted up with a gleam of dawning triumph. He read the item twice, then once more. It had appeared on the inside page of a Philadelphia paper—an unimportant piece of club news. But as Eccellenza read it for the third time he decided that it was much more than that. At last he "had something"—a chance to confound unfriendly newspapers, to outwit the soothing-syrup gentlemen in the State Department, and to vindicate Il Duce's honor.

Smedley Butler, the famous Marine General, had been the speaker of the evening at the Philadelphia Contemporary Club. It was a private meeting, but one of the club members happened to be a reporter. Butler told the story of a hit-and-run accident in which Mussolini figured. The Duce himself, according to the General, was driving the car. A summary of Butler's talk citing the incident got into the Philadelphia paper. This was Nobile de Martino's big chance. A Marine Corps general could not claim the immunity of the free American press. At last



somebody could be brought to account for the gratuitous insults which were being heaped on the head of the Italian Government. The Ambassador rushed up to the State Department to go through the motions once more. But this time it was not to be a routine explosion. He went to see William Castle, Jr., Henry Stimson's Undersecretary of State, and demanded dramatically that this sort of thing be stopped once and for all. Castle saw that the usual formula of invoking State Department helplessness would not work this time, so he tried to placate the envoy by matching his horror at the unfortunate occurrence. A "lamento con dolore" ensued between the Italian Ambassador and the Undersecretary of State. As de Martino waxed ever more lyric, Castle became more completely sorrowful. The Italian Ambassador, excited though he was, was carefully watching the reactions of the American official. Seeing that the Undersecretary of State was disposed to take a serious view of the matter, he demanded that severe disciplinary measures be taken against the offending general.

The officer was obviously at fault in accusing the head of a foreign government with which America maintained friendly relations of being a "cowardly hit-and-run driver" and of desiring "to start a war in Europe!" De Martino made the most of the incident. His demand for diplomatic reparations reached the Secretary of State, who took the matter up with the President.

The pacifist President, Hoover, and the battling Marine General were temperamentally at opposite ends of the pole. Their paths had crossed several times and each time there had been a clash. President Hoover, as com-

mander-in-chief of the armed forces, personally ordered a court martial. A presidential command for a court martial was news. All the papers throughout the country front-paged the story of Butler's statements, and a lively discussion raged as to whether Il Duce was guilty of Butler's charges, and whether remarks at a club meeting could be construed as "public statements." The consensus was, that whether the report was true or not, the Fascist dictator was quite capable of such an act. Mussolini was like the woman of doubtful reputation who was accused of one more lover—it seemed academic to deny it. He was tried and convicted in the American press, not on the merits of the Butler case, but on the record of Fascismo.

De Martino was not allowed a moment's peace. Each new press version demanded a fresh denial or another explanation from the official defender of Il Duce's honor, His Excellency.

Donna Antoinetta for once became the background figure in the de Martino menage. Nobile Giacomo was very much in the limelight. The Italian Ambassador's trips to the State Department, his statements to the newspapermen, all details connected with the Embassy and with Benito Mussolini and Smedley Butler were microscopically reported. A new angle developed daily. Even the lorgnette of the Ambassadress failed to quell the unseemly bustle and excitement among the staff.

The Ministry of Propaganda, alarmed at the publicity, cabled de Martino that he had got hold of a very hot potato and that he had better drop it as rapidly as possible.

The Ambassador himself was beginning to have qualms

about the proportions of the incident. But he was to discover that American hot potatoes, once they become a favorite dish with the public, are particularly hard to bar from the press menu. Try as he would he could not drop this one. He rushed again to the State Department and begged Bill Castle to put a "pianissimo" on the whole affair. He then let the White House know that the "Capo del Governo" was a large-minded man who was ready to forgive the offending general and let the whole matter slip into oblivion. But the ponderous machinery of military law in a democratic state had been put in motion. It could not be stopped with a "ferma" from Il Duce. Butler stood upon his rights and demanded that the trial go on. Poor de Martino was now as earnest in his pleas that the matter be forgotten as he had formerly been insistent that an issue be made of it. There were more trips to the State Department and matters were eventually ironed out. Butler finally consented to close the incident. Mussolini, in the meantime, had received an unprecedented apology from the Secretary of State, but the widespread publicity of the hit-and-run story and of Mussolini's war aims, as described by the general, far outweighed Stimson's apology. De Martino had succeeded too well in his task of defending his Master's honor. It looked as if Italo-American relations were undermined for years to come.

A few months after the Butler incident, France's Premier, Pierre Laval, made a trip to Washington on the basis of a misunderstood invitation. President Hoover suggested through the American Embassy in Paris that

Laval come to Washington to talk disarmament; Laval was primarily interested in settling the debt question. But he was assured by his diplomats in Washington that once he had arrived in the American Capital he would find President Hoover ready to review all outstanding problems.

The Quaker President and the shrewd French peasant got along as well as two crap shooters who each sit down with loaded dice. Mr. Hoover wanted France to stop her obstructive tactics at Geneva, so that his disarmament baby could flourish and America could cease spending money on armaments. Laval would not discuss disarmament unless the security of France were underwritten by the United States. It had long been the French thesis that the Hoover moratorium was an American bankers' plan to safeguard post-war investments in Germany by releasing the Reich from her war obligations to France. Laval insisted that cancellation of the French debt to America was a logical sequence of the Hoover moratorium. Mr. Hoover refused even to discuss the debt question. Before he left Laval gave the French Embassy staff a severe rebuke for encouraging his futile trip to the United States.

He was thoroughly irritated with America and everything American by the time the visit was over. In the space of three days he had an altercation with Senator Borah, a most unsatisfactory interview with President Hoover and unfortunate notices in the Washington press. It is no wonder that Laval gave the French Embassy personnel the least polite side of his tongue.

Twenty-five prominent French journalists accom-

panied the Premier on his trip to America. His boat carried as a supercargo, M. Henry-Haye, the present Vichy Ambassador, who had no official mission, but who had decided to keep his friend company. The newspapermen were bored: Washington was a dull and expensive town and the American Government had not extended them any particular courtesies or arranged for any diversions. It occurred to them that it might be interesting to see that curious figure, the leading isolationist of the Senate. They called on Senator Borah and asked him to expound his views on the international situation. They got an earful. The Senator had plenty of ideas about Europe. One of them was that France should persuade Poland to yield the Danzig Corridor to the Reich.

Laval took exception to Borah's views and expressed himself to his own newsmen who cabled the Premier's remarks to Paris. The news agencies in Paris reported Laval's blast back to Washington the next morning and for a while it looked as if a private war had started between the Senator from Idaho and the Premier of France. An editorial protesting the visiting Frenchman's criticism of an American Senator appeared in a Washington newspaper under the caption "Laval makes a faux-pas." Laval had been assured by the Counsellor of the French Embassy, Jules Henry, that the American press was favorably disposed to the French cause. He pushed the offending newspaper under Henry's nose and shouted: "This is what you call a pro-French press, is it?" There followed some extremely picturesque expressions known only to the shepherds of Laval's native province, Auvergne. The French Premier left America with anger in his heart. His

whirlwind visit had pushed the barometer of French-American relations to a new low.

The Laval fiasco was de Martino's opportunity. He saw a chance to erase the Butler blot from his dossier and to push Italy into the diplomatic vacuum as the only European country willing to cooperate disinterestedly with the United States. Secretary Stimson had paid an official visit to Mussolini in the summer of 1930. It was only natural that Il Duce's Foreign Secretary should return the friendly call. De Martino suggested to Mr. Stimson that Italy's Foreign Minister, Dino Grandi, be asked to visit Washington. He pointed out that Grandi spoke Mr. Hoover's language. There would be no laments about security; no sordid discussion of debts; no left-over bitterness from the Franco-Italian fight at the London Naval Conference. Just a song of eternal world peace . . . The Duce, head of a poor nation, was anxious to limit the armaments race. Hoover, the pacifist and economic royalist, was equally anxious. The visit was arranged.

November 16, 1931, was a very foggy day. The Conte Grande, the best ship of the Italian Line, dropped anchor at Quarantine. On the bridge was bearded Dino Grandi, Mussolini's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Beside him stood his smartly dressed young wife. Warren Robins (Mr. Hoover's Chief of Protocol), who had met the boat at Quarantine, was scanning the skies. Col. Charles Lindbergh had been summoned from Miami to pilot the distinguished visitors from New York to Washington in the latest Pan-American Airways plane. Mr. Stimson

had sent his military aide, Captain Eugene Regnier, to New York to discuss the advisability of a Manhattan reception for the Italian Foreign Minister. Mayor Walker and the Chief of Police discouraged the idea by pointing out that old tomatoes and venerable eggs might get mixed with the confetti thrown by the Italo-Americans, many of whom were anti-Fascists. The State Department was determined that Signor Grandi should not start his visit to the United States with an unpleasant incident, and an "unusual honor," a trip by special plane to Washington, was arranged. But the foggy skies boded ill for an air trip. Finally, word was brought to the anxiously watching Chief of Protocol that all planes were grounded. Plan B went into operation. Grandi and his party were whisked to New Jersey on a Coast Guard cutter; thence to Washington by train.

Donna Antoinetta was looking forward to the Grandi visit with mingled emotions. She refused to show much interest in the impending arrival of the Italian Foreign Minister. He was her husband's boss, but he was also one of the results of the changing world which she so deplored. She could swallow Il Duce; the only alternative was being swallowed. But Mussolini's "upstarts" were another matter. She was relieved when she was informed that the Grandis would stay with Secretary and Mrs. Stimson for two nights and spend the remaining half of their visit at the Mayflower Hotel. The Grandis, who had known the Stimsons well in London, spent a happy two days on the Secretary's Washington estate, Woodley, which Mr. Stimson once again occupies while serving as President Roosevelt's Secretary of War.

On the morning of his first day in Washington Signor Grandi discussed disarmament and world peace with President Hoover and his Secretary of State. Mrs. Stimson had planned a sightseeing tour for young Signora Grandi. But the distinguished visitor confessed that she would enjoy the sights of Washington much more if she could use the telephone before starting out. . . . Signora Grandi called Frascati, near Rome, and talked to Franco Grandi, aged six, and Simonetta, aged four: "Mamma will be back for Christmas with plenty of beautiful toys from America. Papa sends lots of little kisses." The little kisses cost \$36 in telephone tolls which Signora Grandi insisted upon paying.

Grandi rushed from the White House to the State Department, and from the State Department to the White House. The Grandis had a White House and a State Department car at their disposal, and they used them freely. But the "upstart" Grandi knew how to make an appreciative gesture. Before he left, the Italian Foreign Secretary gave a \$40 tip to each chauffeur. King Prajadhipok of Siam had given \$30, Pierre Laval had bestowed \$20, while Ramsay MacDonald had parted with \$15 as an acknowledgment of similar courtesies.

During the visit, the White House issued communiqué after communiqué describing in glowing terms the establishment of a new era in Italian-American cooperation towards world peace and disarmament.

Sometime later, as evidence of good faith and a souvenir of the Washington talks, Signor Grandi proposed at Geneva a naval holiday.

The naval holiday was soon over, but the visit of Dino



Grandi to Washington had one tangible result; it decided the removal from the American Capital of Nobile Giacomo and Donna Antoinetta de Martino. The Italian Foreign Secretary had in Washington heard the inside story, with embellishments, of the Butler incident. Mussolini became convinced that the old diplomatic formula was out as far as the United States was concerned. The de Martinos had entertained lavishly on the relatively small salary of \$40,000 a year (the British paid their representative \$75,000) but among all the people who had dined and wined and "quadrilled" at the Italian Embassy, not a single soul had been able or willing to give the envoy the proper steer through the maze of American politics and psychology. The de Martinos had spent their salary and themselves unstintingly, but without results. And only results counted with the Duce. De Martino was recalled. He was not given castor oil when he returned to Italy; he got the more dignified equivalent. He was made *Senatore del Regno* (Senator of the realm). The Senate, composed of life appointees, was Il Duce's cold-storage room for all those discarded diplomats and politicians who were willing but not fitted to serve the New Regime.

The Duce decided to send a younger and more elastic man to Washington. Augusto Rosso, age 46, a bachelor, was dispatched to this country to see if he could open American eyes to the miracles Fascismo was performing in Italy. The fact that Rosso had no wife was considered an advantage; there had been too much of petticoats in the de Martino embassy. Rosso already knew the United States—he had not only served as a young attaché

in Washington, but had accompanied the Grandis on their trip to America, acting as political advisor to the Italian Foreign Secretary. So Augusto Rosso was on familiar ground when he arrived at the Italian Embassy in the Capital, accompanied by his English pedigreed but Italian born cocker spaniel.

Both Rosso and de Martino were little men with almost ludicrously tiny feet. But there the similarity ended. Rosso was good-looking in a way—with his lean, bronzed face and dazzlingly white teeth. He was the temperamental antithesis of the excitable Giacomo, quiet, unemotional and systematic. He had served for years in Geneva and had acquired a good-natured cynicism about his fellow men in general, and delegates to the League of Nations in particular. Anecdotes about Rosso and the League preceded him to Washington. In 1930 he was on a League committee which was reviewing the Japanese stewardship of the mandated islands in the Pacific. The League had reports that these islands were being made into naval bases. When questioned about the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent by the Japanese "on harbor improvements" of these commercially unimportant islands, Japan's representative, Mr. Matsuoka, explained: "the improvements were made necessary by the bad weather in the Pacific." "Ah," said Rosso, "the Pacific must have changed its habits in the past ten years. . . ."

Rosso knew that the Washington post was not a sinecure. He understood that the "charm and grace at court" period for diplomats was over. Modern diplomacy was a job—it demanded hard work and super-salesmanship.

The number one diplomat of the world today, von Ribbentrop, as yet unheard of when Rosso came to Washington, was at that time learning his job by selling champagne in the capitals of Europe.

Rosso knew that, in a country as large and as decentralized as the United States, the best he could do was to skim the enormous surface. He also knew that the hurried American public, having no time really to get hold of anything or anybody, loved to seize upon personality stories giving the individual peculiarities of persons in the limelight. The American public liked caricatures which afforded the illusion of familiarity. Rosso obligingly made himself into a caricature; he was the sentimental Latin who liked his dog more than anything in the world. The fact that he really loved his cocker spaniel did not detract in the least from his pleasure in the pose—that was Latin too. "Tobias" became a Washington personality. Stories about Rosso and his pet circulated at cocktail parties. Pictures were made of Tobey taking his bath in the embassy pool.

The new Ambassador began to travel almost immediately. There was not an Italo-American rally of any importance at which His Excellency did not appear. Rosso understood that his former compatriots and their descendants were longing to be cordially disrespectful to a symbol of the authority they had escaped by leaving Italy. The prosperous Italian-Americans loved to slap His Excellency on the back and invite him to taste some home-made Chianti and real Italian spaghetti—and to forgive him for being an Excellency. The Ambassador accepted with pleasure: millions of their American dol-

lars were going back to Il Duce's financial oxygen tent every year.

On one of his tours, Rosso stopped in Denver, Colorado. The arrival of an ambassador was news, and Rosso was immediately besieged with calls from reporters. Following his theory about publicity in America, he furnished the reporter with an easy caricature of himself. Fascist Italy? War? How little Americans understood the Italian soul! Italians were thinking of anything but war. . . . He had brought a dog from Italy; the dog missed the blue skies and sunshine of his native land and was very sad; he was looking for a mate to console his pet; that was his principal concern at this time! Rosso pronounced the word "dog" "duck," and the story became the sensation of Denver. An ambassador had brought a pedigreed duck to the United States in order to find a mate! Rosso and his "duck" became the talk of the town for the length of his stay. The story even bounced back into Washington and the Eastern papers.

The story of the melancholic bachelorhood of Rosso's spaniel—he was spending his solitary hours by the pool which had been the playground of the de Martino cat—touched the heartstrings of Washington matrons. They set their matchmaking caps and decided to find a wife for the bachelor envoy's bachelor pet. The negotiations were long and complicated. Pedigrees were exchanged; "points" discussed. Finally a suitable maiden was agreed upon. She moved into the Royal Italian Embassy and into Rosso's private bathroom where Tobias slept. In due course, a flourishing spaniel family appeared in the embassy garden, to Rosso's great delight—a delight

which changed to puzzlement when it became apparent that the puppies were slightly longer than they should be. They got longer as they grew up and one day Rosso sadly told his friends that there could be no mistake—there was a trace of Dachshund in the Italo-American puppies.

Rosso was not a member of the Fascist party, but he had a butler who was a member of the OVRA (the Italian Gestapo) and who relieved him of all bother about party matters. The butler never left the room when the envoy entertained American guests. Even if Rosso asked one friend to take potluck with him—fruit salad and spaghetti—the impressive major-domo stood behind the waiter and majestically surveyed the scene. But Rosso was entirely philosophical about it. He explained in a deprecatory manner that the OVRA was so considerate—at least he did not have a member of his own staff watching him, as was the case with Luther and Troyanovsky. Instead, he was politely shadowed by an efficient butler who never failed to pull out his chair and to call him “Eccellenza” in the most obsequious manner. It was not until the efficient Germans took over the surveillance of the Italian Embassy staff that the hand of the Secret Police began to weigh heavily on Il Duce’s diplomats.

The OVRA check on Rosso was more nominal than real. He went freely about the discharge of his diplomatic duties as he saw them.

His predecessor had brought Dino Grandi to Washington and while the visit had had no permanent result,

it had left in spite of the anti-Fascist tone of American newspapers, a pleasant "simpatico" current running between the Italian Embassy and Washington officials. But the man who had received Grandi in the White House was out. There had been shifts in the State Department and in official circles. The new President had called a world conference of premiers. He seemed conscious of America's potential weight in world politics.

Rosso had a grandiose idea. Why not get in on the diplomatic ground floor of the new Administration? Why not bring the outstanding Italian of the day to Washington? He put out discreet feelers at the State Department. What would President Roosevelt feel about a conference with Mussolini? The answers were encouraging and Rosso started conversations with his Foreign Office about the visit.

The Duce flirted seriously with the idea, but after some delay, Rosso was told that affairs of state would keep the Italian Premier in Rome. Those Washington officials who had heard of the possibility of the Duce's trip, had their own version of his reason for the refusal. The new American President was already a world figure and the Italian dictator did not wish to quit, even briefly, the center of his own stage in order to share the spotlight in another theatre. The visit fell through and Rosso now gave his time to other matters.

He concentrated on the Italo-American societies and cultural groups, and on building up his contacts with Washington newspapermen. He gave a respectable number of dinner parties, but a bachelor could avoid a good deal of purely social activity and Rosso took advantage

of his unwedded state to cut out lost motion. Those of his colleagues who had wives had to go through the social routine or risk stirring up a storm in a teacup which might end by having a real nuisance value.

Rosso's quiet lunches with his men friends stood him in good stead. He discovered that the most effective diplomacy with Americans was an appearance of brutal frankness, provided it was accompanied by a good-natured willingness to give and take. Americans, it seemed, were convinced that diplomats were deep, dark, involved and Machiavellian. A frank admission of a sin disarmed them. The mere telling, somehow, took away the sting.

Rosso was the originator of the Dieckhoff technique; he was the first foreign envoy to use "disarming frankness" in his contacts with American officialdom and the press.

When the invasion of Ethiopia took place, Il Duce's envoy was besieged by telephone calls from newspapermen. He made himself accessible to all and sundry. America became righteously indignant over the Ethiopian affair. Some of the reporters tried to corner Rosso into admitting that Italy was a ruthless bully. Rosso merely smiled—a very charming white-toothed smile and explained unexcitedly that aggression should not be condemned too severely. "After all," expounded the Italian Ambassador, "political rape is an old, old story. But you will notice," he added, "that it is only the young and vigorous who commit that particular sin!"

Rosso did all he could to sell the inevitability of Italy's move into Ethiopia. Rome obligingly sent lecturers to

the United States to reinforce the Ambassador's campaign. One of the most effective of the propagandists was Daniele Vare, a well-known English-writing novelist, whose wife, mother and grandmother were all English born. Stories about the handsome and witty Vare, a Latin with a Barrie-esque sense of humor, got to Washington some weeks before he did.

He was a former Italian diplomat who had been retired from the active service under most unusual circumstances. He was serving as Ambassador to Peiping when he was ordered back to Rome and appointed Chief of Personnel, by his former underling, Count Ciano, who had just become Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The job was distasteful to Daniele Vare, who liked outlandish places. For one whole year he never once set foot in the Foreign Office. He left his new desk job severely alone. Not only did he sedulously avoid the Palazzo Chigi but he bet a friend 10,000 lire that nobody would notice his absence. He won the bet and boasted about it. Gossip travels as fast in Rome as in Washington. While his absence from the Foreign Office had never been noticed, his boast was immediately recorded. Mussolini personally ordered the witty diplomat's retirement. But Vare was too gifted as a writer and a lecturer to be completely shelved. He was sent to this country by the Ministry of Propaganda to help Rosso sell "a little bit of inevitable aggression!"

The two clever diplomats, Rosso and Vare, actually succeeded in toning down the righteous indignation of prominent members of the newspaper fraternity. They used a combination of sweeping logic and beguiling



witticism. Even Fascismo did not escape their pleasant irony. "Where could Italy go but into Ethiopia?" the song would begin. "Had not this country barred Italian immigration? Had not France and Britain, a few months earlier given their secret blessings to the African adventure, and then howled for public effect? As for Fascism—it was not as dramatic as it appeared to be. A lot of high ranking party members, who had medals on their chests and who looked impressive, had nothing but sawdust in their heads. They liked to strut in their showy uniforms, but they weren't really dangerous."

It was a most mellow type of propaganda. Everything was diverting, nothing was worth getting wrought up about. It worked well with educated people, usually willing to abandon an ideal formula when presented with a many-faceted case by an accomplished conversationalist. The Italian diplomats' crowning argument was unanswerable: "Anyway, it's almost over now. You haven't *done* anything about it, so why create bad feeling between Italy and America by more talk?"

Rosso was doing a good job in Washington. But changes had taken place in Rome. His friend, Dino Grandi, had been sent to London to remind Ramsay MacDonald of his whispered approval of the Ethiopian affair and to see that sanctions remained a purely formalistic expression of disapproval. Count Ciano, who was no particular friend of Rosso's, had replaced Grandi in the Foreign Office.

Fascism was tightening its hold on Italy. The very successes of the Italian Ambassador in Washington be-

gan to be looked upon with suspicion. Some elements of the Palazzo Chigi insisted that the non-party envoy got along so well because he had become Americanized. Then the news got back to Rome that Rosso was being seriously attentive to an American lady and his recall was definitely decided upon. Many governments frown on mixed marriages in their foreign services. Ultra-nationalistic Italy and Germany were among the first to forbid international alliances for their diplomats. There has never been any ban, of course, on extra-legal attention to the fair sex. Both the German and Italian Embassy staffs have shown a flattering susceptibility to the charms of American women. Herbert Scholz, of the Nazi staff, made a special point of expressing, to certain ladies of the press, his very warm admiration.

Matrimony was different; the question of loyalties immediately entered the picture with the ceremony. A diplomat's wife must not be a victim of political schizophrenia. She must not be torn between her own country and that of her husband. Unless she were extremely wealthy in transferable assets, a foreign wife was apt to be a liability.

The Duce chose to be lenient in a few cases and to sanction some mixed marriages. But he would not permit one of his ambassadors to stay in America after he had acquired an American wife. Rosso married the lady of his choice and was immediately sent to Moscow to represent the Duce at the Kremlin.

Rosso's successor, Fulvio Suvich, was a strict party man. The polite major-domo ceased to be a watch-dog.

He was under the new Ambassador's orders in every particular.

Suvich was offered a sejour in the desirable Washington Embassy as a reward for distinguished services to the Fascist State, and because there was a new job to be done in the United States for which he was particularly well qualified. He arrived with his golden-haired, plumpish Signora in the fall of 1936. Details of his appearance and background were already known in Washington. The first newspaper write-up of the envoy-designate, described his "fishy eyes." The article was forwarded to the Palazzo Chigi and Suvich showed it to his wife. She was indignant—the American press was attacking her husband before he even arrived in Washington!

Shortly after reading the offending article, the Suviches attended a dinner party given in their honor at the American Embassy in Rome. Turning to Ambassador William Phillips at the dinner table, Signora Suvich exclaimed: "Just imagine! The American press is describing my dear little pet as having fishy eyes." The new Ambassadress paused a moment and scrutinized her husband, who was sitting opposite her, at the right of Mrs. Phillips. She then startled her dinner partner by adding in a reflective tone: "Yes, I think they are!"

Signora Suvich was naturally curious about life in Washington, and plied Phillips with questions. She learned that she must expect a very active season, a continual round of receptions and dinners. She was told to be prepared for an American innovation in entertaining—the all feminine luncheon party or "hen luncheon." She was highly amused at the Ambassador's description

of festive meals without male partners, and she looked at him skeptically when Phillips assured her that American women considered such gatherings "good times."

After her conversation with Phillips, the Ambassadors-designate made a visit to Rome's best couturière and ordered herself an elaborate wardrobe in anticipation of her first season in Washington.

The Suviches crossed the ocean and moved into the Italian Embassy. Cards were left on the envoy and his wife, of course, but the anticipated round of dinners in honor of a newly-arrived Excellency were slow in materializing. There was no mad rush to entertain the newcomers.

Suvich attributed the Capital's lack of reaction to his arrival to snobbishness. He decided that he was handicapped because he had no handle to his name—because he was plain "Suvich." The new Ambassador was first listed in the State Department Diplomatic List as Signor Fulvio Suvich. He inquired of the Department if a "de" could precede his name without upsetting the routine. The "de" was inserted and de Suvich the Ambassador remained until his departure.

The lack of enthusiasm over the new Ambassador was not to be attributed to his untitled estate. An Excellency, plain or varnished, is always readily accepted by Washington; but the first officials who met Italy's new envoy reported that he was not a very prepossessing gentleman. His lugubrious expression and viscous, fugitive eyes were not appealing. He had two other handicaps: one real and the other no less damaging because it existed largely in his own imagination.

First, he spoke poor English and little French—the accepted language of the Diplomatic Corps. Second, there was a skeleton in the Suvich closet; its existence was known to very few, but the Ambassador saw it dangling constantly before his eyes, and he imagined that it was mirrored in the faces of all who looked at him. Suvich had been the connecting link between Il Duce and Ante Pavelic, the Croatian politico (now Prime Minister of the Croatian Kingdom) who had arranged the assassination of King Alexander of Yugoslavia, at Marseille in 1934.

Suvich's role had been that of intermediary. Mussolini communicated with Pavelic through Signor Suvich, then Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs. Suvich also made the necessary financial arrangements and obtained the visas from France for Pavelic's gang of murderers. The Washington Embassy was his reward for his share in the elimination of the energetic Serbian Monarch—the strongest link in the chain of French security in Europe. Although the envoy had simply obeyed the orders of his chief when he helped in the Marseille affair, something was quite evidently weighing heavily on his mind. There was a secret, haunted look about him and an apparent lack of interest in the society of his fellow men. The Ambassador's indifference drew the same response and he was never able to make a place for himself in Washington, even among those who had never heard of the skeleton.

Despite the Ambassador's personal handicaps, the Suviches obeyed orders and started to entertain. Italy and Germany had just joined hands in war-torn Spain.

The Axis was new-born and it was no time to give the impression in Washington that Italy was withdrawing from any sector of the American diplomatic front. Big things were ahead which could develop best behind the façade of legitimate diplomacy.

The embassy social secretary pulled out the lists which had served Donna Antoinetta de Martino, and with some additions and revisions, Augusto Rosso. Envoys come and go. An incoming ambassador inherits his predecessors' lists, finds the notations on social connections and official contacts carefully filed in the embassy. The cards which had recently been left at the door were checked against the lists, and invitations to dinners and soirées were dispatched throughout Washington. It was soon fairly obvious that the Suviches cared much less about the selection of their guests than they did about creating the impression that they were entertaining lavishly, that they were living up to the tradition of the Italian Embassy. They were like the owners of a luxurious hotel who do not wish the lobby and the dining-room to be conspicuously empty for fear of encouraging speculations about what might be going on in the rest of the building. For under the new envoy, lights began to burn brightly in the Chancery and it became the scene of intense activity. Suvich, past-master of the art of underground organization, was laying the foundation for the extra duties which the Italian consuls all over the United States would be called upon to perform at the given word and time.

In the meantime, Signora Suvich filled the embassy drawing-room. Frequently the Ambassador not only did

not know the faces, but did not take the trouble to catch the names of his guests. The illusion of social activity was produced, but it was plain that Suvich considered Washington a railroad station in which he was making a pause between trains. His point of view was contagious—the other members of the embassy were polite but vague in their attitude toward embassy guests.

An Ambassador always has some members of his staff at his parties. It is the duty of the attachés and their wives to move about from group to group and make polite conversation. At one of the Suvich dinners, a young Secretary approached a tall handsome lady and admired the three strands of pearls around her throat. "May I be indiscreet and ask whether these beautiful pearls are real?" inquired the diplomat. The lady drew herself up and replied: "*I am Mrs. Myron Taylor!*"

Signora Suvich went ahead with a full social program. She had heard of Donna Antoinetta de Martino's colorful quadrilles and of the impression they had produced in Washington. She decided to use the embassy patio for a Neapolitan Fiesta.

Some eighty guests from social and official Washington were invited to dine at the Embassy on an evening in May.

Scores of candle-lit tables were set out in the patio. The central water spout of the pool was throwing colored celluloid balls into the air; they rose and fell in the center of a bouquet of curving crystal drops. The archways of the cloister cast deep shadows into the moonlit garden. It was a lovely scene and people exclaimed about it as they looked for their places. On each little table was

a menu announcing an all-Italian meal: antipasto, spaghetti, capretto al forno; zabaglione. The wines were Italian also; not even that inevitable corollary of diplomatic entertaining, French champagne, broke into the Neapolitan accent of the evening.

As the meal advanced, a quartet began to move around the garden playing accompaniments for a wandering tenor who was serenading the evening and the moon. They paused at a table, and one of the guests suggested to the minstrels that they play "Giovenezza," the Fascist anthem. An attaché, with a deprecatory gesture, put a smiling veto to the suggestion. "The singing of the Fascist song might be interpreted as propaganda, and that is not the role of the Italian Embassy!" The musicians stuck to the safe "O Sole Mio," "Adio a Napoli" and other arch-familiar lyrics.

Most of the guests knew each other and some of them recognized the waiters and the musicians. Nearly all the fruit vendors, cheese merchants, and shoe menders of Washington had been called in to make the evening a success. The unctuous tenor voice belonged to the most prosperous olive-oil merchant in town. He looked gorgeous; in a bright red satin shirt with a black silk sash knotted around his straining waist. All the ingredients for a perfect "fiesta" were at Signora Suvich's command, and the party should have gone on until the wee small hours of the morning. But something was wrong—there was a pall in the air. Perhaps a shadow from the host's own mind lay over the evening. The guests began to leave at the protocol hour, as soon as the guest of honor had departed.



Eighteen months passed, and Italy began to echo the anti-Semitic policy of Nazi Germany. Plump, blonde Signora Suvich was not "pure Italian." The Suviches were recalled to Rome. The former Ambassador was not made a Senatore del Regno—that doubtful consolation was not for one whose services to Fascismo had been considerable, whose knowledge of certain matters was deep. Suvich was given a substantial plum: Il Duce made him director of the three most important insurance companies in Italy, all of which had their headquarters in Signor Fulvio's native town, Trieste.

The Duce accepted Suvich's version of his lack of success and decided that Washington was a silly, snobbish town, which did not know an able man when it saw him.

Suvich illustrated his theme with a number of authentic stories garnered from observation and from his attachés' experiences. He told of the incident related by one of his married secretaries who had decided to sub-let his furnished house for the summer. A tenant was found; the arrangements were made. The young Italian couple were getting ready to put away their personal belongings and small bibelots. The agent, a former member of the Diplomatic Corps, forbade the secretary to remove the winter's collection of "pasteboards," some of them carrying imposing names and titles, which had gathered in a silver bowl on the front hall table. "Leave them there," said the agent. "I got you \$20 a month more because I promised your tenant that the visiting cards would be included in the furniture!"

Suvich also related the story of the arrival of a young French diplomat, bearer of one of the most famous titles in Europe. The impending arrival of the young couple was announced in the Washington newspapers. A Washington hostess, who knew them only from the *Almanach de Gotha*, cabled them while they were still on the high seas, asking them to set the day to come and have tea with her. Though the astonished youngsters possessed one of the oldest titles in Europe they had very little money—they didn't answer the cable.

Suvich himself had been astonished to see at one of Mrs. Hull's teas (a non-invitation "at home") some of the guests picking out the more impressive visiting cards from the pile left by the callers. Suvich persuaded Il Duce that the decadent American democracy was impressed by titles. It was only in a vital growing country, such as Italy, that ability was paramount. The former blacksmith's son decided to outbid every prefix on the Diplomatic List. He named Don Ascanio dei Principe Colonna, to the Washington post.

Il Duce, having taken this decision, was nothing if not thorough. The whole embassy list was revised to fit Suvich's description of Washington's predilection for resounding names. Nobile Renato della Chiesa dei conti d'Isaca; Marchese Alberto Rossi Longhi; Lieutenant Count Ettore Filo della Tore di Santa Susana—joined the Washington staff.

There could be no discussion about Colonna's right to head the list of illustrious names in the Washington Diplomatic Corps. He comes from a family dating back to the IXth century. There is a story currently told in

Rome that his father turned down the present King of Italy as a son-in-law on the ground that the House of Savoy was parvenu compared to the ancient house of Colonna.

The Old Roman Houses are known for their pride of family—and their ability to bow to the passing storm. No family could survive eleven centuries of political upheaval without a certain amount of graceful adaptability. Although it was rumored that the elder Colonna considered the King of Italy a mesalliance, Don Ascanio was quite willing to serve the blacksmith's son, in Washington.

The distinguished new Ambassador and his striking wife should have become spotlight figures in the Washington diplomatic set. Any casting director would have found, in the Grecian-born Princess Colonna, the perfect type for the role of Ambassadress. The Italian Foreign Office rates her qualifications so highly that she is given a special representation allowance for her purely personal use. It may cover anything, from orchids to mink, which the Princess considers necessary for her role on the Washington stage.

Colonna is handsome in a sharply-filed, neat way, perfectly distinguished but looking as if the centuries had used up the stuff of which Colonnas are made. His courteous "gentleman of the old school" manner, his general culture and knowledge of music and art, should have made him the Italian Jusserand, the ideal ambassador from the Kingdom of Italy.

But the jigsaw picture of the Washington Diplomatic Corps has been tossed into a heap and the piece representing Italy is somewhere at the bottom of the lot.

When the Mellon Art Gallery opened in March, 1941, to dazzle thousands of guests with seven centuries of Italian Art, Colonna was there, but he was lost in the milling crowd. Not so very long ago, such a ceremony would have found Italy's representative in the center of the stage making a graceful speech about Italo-American friendship and cultural ties.

By the spring of '41, Italy's representatives had had time to get accustomed to living in a diplomatic vacuum in Washington. Months before the attack on France and the President's stab-in-the-back speech of June, 1940, the Italian Embassy staff had ceased to circulate, leaving Axis diplomatic contacts to their Nazi colleagues, who were beating a skillful retreat from the scene of legitimate diplomacy. The Italian fadeout began after Germany attacked Poland.

During the first months of the war, members of the Italian staff were still much in evidence in Washington. Some of them were frankly expressing the hope that Hitler would break his neck in Flanders so that "Italians can sightsee once more in their own Italy, which has become a regular Luna Park for the Germans." As for Fascismo, a titled Italian shrugged his shoulders, delicately raised his eyebrows and commented on the fact that he had to use the diplomatic pouch to send his well-to-do mother packages of American coffee, butter, powdered milk, chocolate, and even sacks of flour. . . .

The Italians were circulating too freely, and talking too much, to suit the Nazi diplomatic establishment in Washington, and before the end of 1939 the Gestapo took over the job the OVRA was not doing satisfactorily.

Members of the Italian Embassy began to be shadowed by the secret service of their ally. They had become accustomed to the surveillance of the F.B.I. and had laughed at it. But the Nazi check on their daily activities was another matter. J. Edgar Hoover's reports were merely filed away "for future reference" in the State Department. The Gestapo reports might endanger their official necks. The Government-subsidized Stefani correspondent in Washington, under orders of the Embassy, was not encouraged to associate freely with his American colleagues, and his movements were closely watched. A short while ago, he found he could take it no longer and resigned his position.

Italian Embassy guest lists came under the official Nazi supervision. Prince Colonna, descendant of eleven hundred years of prideful living, was now permitted to entertain Japanese, Germans, Spaniards, and certain "approved" South Americans. Not one of Colonna's staff dared turn down an invitation from the German Embassy. An attaché's wife, who tried it, pleading illness, received a personal call from one of Herr Thomsen's staff, demanding visible proof that she was not well.

Prince Colonna's diplomatic experience, prior to his arrival in Washington, had been of the most innocent variety. He had served on the Suez Canal Commission in Egypt as the representative of Italy. He now found himself at the head of the organization which Fulvio Suvich had been sent to the United States to create; the consular network for propaganda and sabotage. The new Ambassador stepped into nominal control of this organization. Orders came to him directly from the Nazi-controlled

Palazzo Chigi, in Rome. One of His Excellency's counsellors, Signor Bifulco, was the active transmitter of the signals to the Italian consuls, in the United States, which always followed closely the flashes from the Nazi organization to German agents throughout this country.

When the Selective Service bill was stirring Congress into bitter and noisy debate, Signor Bifulco called presidents of Italian groups in Washington to the Embassy and gave them orders from Rome regarding the tempo and type of propaganda to be used against the bill.

The news about this meeting leaked out, and the heads of the societies, many of them professional men who had done well in their chosen callings in the Capital, felt very uncomfortable.

They had consistently maintained that their "loggias" and "clubs" were purely cultural and had no connection with Rome or the Italian Embassy—beyond social contact.

Now the embassy itself was caught in the act of giving orders, in connection with propaganda, to American citizens of Italian origin, through Italian consular agents, not only in Washington but in more than sixty American cities.

It was Count Roberti's adventure with the Mexican customs authorities in February, 1941, which fully brought home to social Washington the realization that the titled Italian Embassy was actually a façade for subversive activities. Count Roberti, who had been well known in Washington as an attaché and as the husband of Ogden Hammond's daughter, was stopped at the Mexican border. In his carefully sealed diplomatic pouch, the

Mexican Customs Officers, who had been tipped off by the F.B.I. men in Washington, discovered \$2,000,000 in American currency. The money was being smuggled into Mexico shortly before Vice-President Wallace was due to arrive at the inauguration of President Camacho.

Until this incident, Washington was inclined to believe that the gentlemanly Italians would not go in for undercover work à la Nazi. Il Duce's decision to give Washington a princely ambassador and a bouquet of titled aides, was founded on the belief that such diplomats would be given the benefit of the doubt and it is a fact that the Italian Embassy was forced to abandon an active social role—not by Washington hostesses but by the German Gestapo.

During the summer of 1941, German diplomats were still appearing at Washington clubs. The Nazi military and naval attachés and their wives were seen frequently at the Chevy Chase Country Club, dancing, golfing, cocktailing, apparently unconscious of America's undeclared war. The Duce's diplomats, on the other hand, have completely disappeared from the Washington scene. Perhaps they are too sensitive to bear with equanimity the position in which they find themselves—wagging the tail of the Axis. Perhaps they would rather be alone than in the society the Nazis permit them to frequent. Perhaps they dislike hearing the current quip about the descendant of the House of Colonna who has been dubbed the head of the "Cinque Colonna" (Fifth Column) in the United States. Whatever the reason, they prefer to eat their spaghetti and drink their sour wine in the solitude of the embassy cloister.



## IX

### THE GHOSTS

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THE LAST tremulous note of Bach's Air for G String wailed through the drawing-room and died behind the rose brocade curtains. Balokovich kept his eyes closed as his bow remained suspended in mid-air. The audience sighed, and then began to applaud with genuine enthusiasm. There was a large proportion of music lovers among the company which had assembled in the Yugoslav Legation to listen to the famous Serbian violinist.

On that evening in January of troubled 1941, the old-fashioned house on Sixteenth Street seemed unchanged. The rooms were gay with flowers; the audience of décolleté women and black-coated men was not without brilliance. It ranked from the Supreme Court to the Belgian Embassy, to the Central European legations and the American State Department. But if one looked closely there were gaps in the rows of gold chairs. Germany was not represented. The Yugoslavs were the only neutral diplomats who maintained a policy of keeping the Ger-



man Embassy staff at a distance. The German Chargé d'Affaires, Thomsen, did not fail to notice Fotitch's attitude and to report it to Berlin. The German minister to Belgrade informed the then minister of foreign affairs, Cinkar Markovic, that Fotitch was neither going to the German Embassy or inviting the members of the Nazi staff to the Yugoslav Legation. Markovic immediately drew his minister's attention to the "regrettable oversight" but realist Constantin Fotitch knew that it was useless to indulge in drawing-room appeasement, so he spared himself the strain of seeing his German colleagues. France, the old ally of Serbia, was not in evidence. The Ambassador from democratic France, Count de St. Quentin, had gone; and the Yugoslav Minister had little use for the ersatz Ambassador, M. Henry-Haye, who now represented the country which had once been Belgrade's staunchest ally in Europe. England was in a death struggle and her attachés were too occupied to attend to the lighter side of diplomatic life, its receptions and soirées.

In spite of the obvious gaps in representation from the Corps, a sizable company was assembled in the hospitable drawing room of Minister Fotitch. A party at an embassy or a legation in the winter of 1941 had the unmistakable aura of a revival play—a "let's all dress up and pretend it's yesterday" atmosphere.

The festive company in the salon of the Yugoslav Legation was conscious of somber undertones to the strains of Balokovich's violin. Every foreign diplomat present had a shadow hanging over his head—either an ever-threatening invasion, or actual occupation of his land.

The number of envoys without countries had been steadily increasing. As one European state after another yielded to the seductive song of the fifth columnist, or was ravished by the armies of the dictators, one minister after another had ceased to represent the body of his country. He had become a diplomatic ghost; the representative of the free soul of a bound and helpless land with which the Excellency was unable to communicate.

Since 1938 when the death march began with Austria, state after state had occupied the headlines, and then sunk into oblivion as the Nazi armies walked in and closed the doors. In Washington the ghosts remained, suggesting that the old world was dying, underlining the uneasy question in the minds of American officialdom, inviting by their very presence a melancholic review of the rapid devastation of three short years.

The foreign diplomats in the Yugoslav drawing room seemed less conscious of the pall in the air than the American officials. Perhaps they had grown accustomed to living with shadows. The representatives of the menaced Turks, the conquered Bulgarians, Belgians, Rumanians and the fighting Greeks had been listening in rapt absorption, apparently lost in the music. In the minds of the Americans there were the ever-present questions: How long for Yugoslavia? When for Turkey? Who next? The interrogation point was almost visible as they looked uneasily around the room. Yugoslavia was next—her hour only a few months in the future. This was to be the last party in the Royal Legation before its doors would open for a benefit for Yugoslav refugees.

The dark, forceful countenance of murdered King

Alexander was looking down upon the assembled guests. Minister Fotitch had been an intimate friend of the monarch whose portrait adorned the north wall of his salon. He would often look at it and say that the bullet that killed Alexander in Marseille was the opening shot of the Second World War. With the assassination the curtain rose on the drama which was to end with the invasion of Fotitch's own land, and his entrance into the ranks of ghost envoys in Washington.

No one had been more keenly aware of the significance of each unfolding scene than Fotitch. Though he had watched the drama with the intellectual detachment of the political analyst, he had not been a mere spectator. From the day in 1934 when he had begged his King not to go to Marseille, to the morning in 1941 when he had asked President Roosevelt for support for threatened Yugoslavia, he had been unfailing in his efforts to influence the current of events.

When the fatal shot was fired, Fotitch was in Geneva representing his country at the League of Nations. Rumors of the impending Italian-sponsored murder had been circulating for some weeks in continental capitals. Any rumor that circulated came eventually to the ears of Fotitch, who had well-placed friends in every part of Europe. When he was convinced of the substance of the stories which were reaching him, he rushed to Belgrade and pleaded with his monarch not to go to France through Marseille. But Alexander stubbornly refused to listen; his plans were already laid, the French Government had made preparations to receive him at the Mediterranean port—it was too late to draw back.

The diplomatic atmosphere between France and her ally, Yugoslavia, needed clearing, and Alexander was determined to do it himself. The King had recently warned a threatening Mussolini that unless the Italians behaved, he would march at the head of his army and dictate peace terms in Rome. And now there were rumors, substantiated by some evidence, that the French intended to appease Mussolini at the expense of Yugoslavia—that there were pro-Fascist elements among French leaders. Alexander planned to speak frankly with the French, and to find out whether the Little Entente was still a going concern. In spite of all that Fotitch could say, the courageous and hard-headed monarch set sail for Marseille according to schedule, on the destroyer Dubrovnik.

In the meantime, on a large farm at Janka Puszta, in Hungary, professional murderers were being carefully trained in the technique of political assassination. Ante Pavelic, a disgruntled Croatian politico, had interested Mussolini in the financing of the plan for the elimination of Alexander from the European political scene.

With the disappearance of Alexander, a weakened Yugoslavia and an isolated France would be more amenable to reason. Il Duce gave his support to Pavelic, with whom he communicated through the Italian Undersecretary of State, Fulvio Suvich. A certain Kwaternic, a revolutionary Croatian student, became the muscle man of the gang of assassins. In May, 1941, Kwaternic obtained his reward: the conquerors of Yugoslavia made him Field Marshal of the Croatian Army.

Everybody in Europe seemed to be aware of the im-

pending assassination except the French Government. Practically no precautions were taken at Marseille for safeguarding the King. Major Curet of the French Intelligence Service went to Paris and warned the Chief of the Sûreté Nationale (the French F.B.I.) that unless more protection was provided, the sovereign's life would be jeopardized. He put before the leading policeman of France actual photographs of the murderers, who had obtained French visas through Fulvio Suvich, and who were already in Marseille. The Chief of the Sûreté told Curet to mind his own business and to leave police matters to the police. The conscientious Curet could not leave things at that. He went to the Quai d'Orsay and saw the chef de cabinet (confidential secretary) of Foreign Minister Barthou. He was told to go back to Marseille and continue his inquiries. . . .

The Yugoslav Consul-General at Marseille had become seriously alarmed when he learned that one policeman stationed every hundred yards was to constitute the sole safety cordon along Alexander's route through the city. He tried desperately to rouse the local secret service, but was told that "not a single French hand would be raised, except to applaud the beloved ally!"

When the King landed from the destroyer and saw the scanty police force which was supposed to afford him protection, he turned to Barthou and said: "If this is all you are going to give me, I am a dead man." Barthou handed out the familiar bromide: "The people of France love you, Your Majesty." It was too late to turn back; the King and the Foreign Minister went down the gangplank

and entered the convertible limousine—a 1925 model with wide running boards. Behind the automobile, which moved at a five-mile-an-hour pace, rode two staff officers with drawn swords. There were no police motorcycle cars to protect the crawling target. Kwaternic's hirelings jumped on the running board and the King was assassinated within fifteen minutes after he had left the Marseille landing stage.

Queen Marie had come to France by train. She arrived in Marseille to find the body of her murdered husband lying in state. President Lebrun met her with the usual consoling words. Forgetting royal etiquette, the Queen shrieked at him: "Vous l'avez assassiné!" (You have murdered him!)

When a friend called Fotitch up in Geneva and started with the halting phrase: "Mr. Minister, I am afraid . . ." he was interrupted with a sharp: "Has he been killed outright?"

Fotitch got in touch with the French secret police, across the border, and asked them to attempt at least to locate and arrest the assassins. A few days later, at about 2 a.m., the phone rang in his bedroom at the Hotel des Bergues. The French Consul at Geneva informed him that he had received a phone call from the border station, across the lake, to the effect that two suspects had been arrested, but that they spoke no language except Portuguese. Would the Minister care to get an interpreter to interrogate the men? Fotitch replied that he would be at the Consulate in 15 minutes. When he arrived unaccompanied, the French Consul said: "Where is the interpreter?" "I am," replied Fotitch. "Do you then speak

Portuguese?" "No," was the answer, "but neither do the arrested men. If they are the ones who killed my King they speak either Bulgarian, or Serbian, or Hungarian, or Croatian. I speak all of those languages." When they got to the French border the speculation of the Minister proved to be correct. The men spoke Croatian. They were part of the gang hired by Pavelic. The real instigators were too high up to be openly accused of murder. The chief culprit, Ante Pavelic, was sheltered by Il Duce. He was comfortably installed in a villa near Turin, and Mussolini refused not only his extradition but even an examination by judges. Today Pavelic is Prime Minister of the New Croat Kingdom, wrested from Yugoslavia, and is the proud possessor of the highest Italian and German decorations.

A haunting reminder of Alexander's untimely end followed Fotitch from Geneva to Washington. He had not been long installed in the Yugoslav Legation when Fulvio Suvich presented credentials from Victor Emmanuel of Italy to the President of the United States. The two envoys met frequently in the course of their diplomatic routine and found themselves, on several occasions, at the same flower-decked dinner table. Suvich suspected that Fotitch knew of the role he had played in the Marseille tragedy. Fotitch suspected that Suvich suspected that he knew. As the two envoys raised their champagne glasses and joined in the inevitable toast to international amity, no one among those present would have suspected the thoughts in the mind of either one.

Constantin Fotitch, like most intellectuals of the Balkan countries, had had an eclectic education. His youthful, impressionable years had been spent in Paris and Vienna, but he had managed to absorb the culture of those sophisticated capitals without adopting their "laissez-faire" philosophy. He profited by his foreign education—yet he remained thoroughly representative of his own race of gentlemen-peasants.

The only titles in Yugoslavia are those of the Royal Family. For the rest, the people which make up the Kingdom spring from the earth. Intellectuals, artists, businessmen, tillers of the soil—all come from the same roots. The Legation of Yugoslavia in Washington is a perfect cross-section of the Kingdom. The Minister is a Serb, his Counsellor a Slovene, the first secretary a Croatian, the military attaché, a Dalmatian. Oddly enough, it is the one foreign mission in Washington which is noted for its harmonious staff work, and for the pleasant "one-family" atmosphere in the Chancery.

While the attachés of the French Embassy were spending their time knifing each other; while the Italians were looking suspiciously at one another; while the Nazis were shadowing their ambassadors, and the Soviets were purging their envoys, the Yugoslavs were getting together to drink slivovitz and to listen to collections of victrola records in each other's one or two-room apartments. Slivovitz is vodka which has taken a Ph.D. degree: it has fire in its depths, but instead of putting its devotees under the table, it leads to animated and friendly discussions of art, literature and international politics.



Within eighteen months of his arrival in Washington, Fotitch had not only organized his staff to play in orchestral harmony, but he had become, without effort, one of the best-liked envoys in town.

When Stoyadinovitch became the first appeasement Foreign Minister of Yugoslavia, Constantin Fotitch was removed from Geneva and "demoted" to Washington. When he arrived he spoke no English and knew only a handful of people in the Diplomatic Corps. He was the representative of a country which had purely formal relations with the United States—about on a par with the representative from Costa Rica before the Pan-American program got under way.

Fotitch made no attempt to capture society, the press or Washington officialdom. He was completely innocent of any intention to make himself into a "personality." His passion for suckling pig (not older than four weeks), for baby lamb (the size of a large cat) and for special Serbian dishes which a woman cook, who followed him from Yugoslavia, prepared for his intimate meals, got into the papers only by accident. The recipe for a cheese and liver paté enveloped in pastry as fine as cigarette paper was obtained by one of Washington's Woman's Page editors only after strenuous efforts. It made a big hit.

Fotitch looks like a man with a fondness for rich food: having sat, as he has, in the front row of the theatre of the world and having watched the march of events which led to his own inclusion in the ranks of ghost envoys, it is not surprising that he decided, long ago, to enjoy the last suckling pig.

No one would suspect from looking at his thick fingers that they could evoke delicate sounds from the piano. When the day's crop of news has been particularly bad, the big heavy-set man and his gifted wife, Tatiana, will sit down at two pianos and play a Chopin or Bach duet.

Though Fotitch frequently makes the remark that his country has no indigenous culture and that the chief Serbian contribution to the world has been—merely—an inviolable sense of honor, his home is virtually the only cultural center in diplomatic Washington.

There are frequent entertainments at the Yugoslav Legation. The Minister and his wife, and their attachés, function like a well-drilled team when a party is in progress. But it is an unconscious effort, springing from the instinct of hospitality and not a smooth technique. They are really glad to see their guests arrive. In a town where hostesses ask people to dinner for every reason in the world except a desire to see them, such simplicity on the part of an Excellency and his wife is diverting. It captivated the fancy of the Capital, astonished many who had been boring themselves in the belief that to be amused was a sign of ignorance, to be pleasant a sign of inferiority.

There had been many attempts to create salons in the Nation's Capital, but they had all failed. Wealthy dowagers moved in, took large houses, invited Justices of the Supreme Court, Ambassadors, Senators, and—if they were very daring—John L. Lewis, or a newspaperman to dinner. But unaccountably, such evenings would always turn into just another dinner instead of becoming the birthplace of a new idea, or a source of inspiration

to those in charge of the Destiny of the Country.

The Fotitchs, without trying, achieved a salon.

Louis Adamic, Jan Kiepura, Emil Ludwig, Alexis Leger, Pertinax, Tabouis, Count Sforza, and scores of other intellectual liberals, artists, and musicians came to the Yugoslav Legation when they arrived in the Capital.

The Fotitch parties became as sought after by the Washington social set as the more magnificent receptions of the Ambassadors of the larger countries. Society could not afford to be conspicuously absent from the one intellectual salon in Washington.

The Yugoslav couple never tried to say howdy folks, but behind their correct greeting there was warmth of welcome and a genuine hospitality. They did away with that diplomatic stiffness which made some Washington parties as rigid as a starched collar. When the company was small, there would be songs or piano-playing by the Fotitchs, or some of their friends. When the function was purely official, the Minister would generally have dancers or musicians who would offer the less talkative guests a pleasant way of spending the evening.

The cordiality which greets you at the Yugoslav Legation begins at the front door. Unless there is an official party scheduled, Yovan himself will open the door and beam at the caller. Yovan has been in Washington for twenty years and has never left Yugoslav territory, except to go to the drug store round the corner. When he was brought to Washington, straight from Sarajevo, by the first Minister from the Kingdom of the Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, he became very homesick. He cheered up

when he was told that 1620 Sixteenth Street was Yugoslav territory just as much as his own town, and that he was its chief guardian. Remarked Yovan after the Nazi invasion: "This is one piece the Nazis didn't get!"

Yovan now combines the functions of watchdog, usher, and guardian of the Minister's privacy with that of custodian of the manners, morale, and happiness of the entire Legation staff. He sees to it that only friends of Serbia get an entrée into the Legation, and according to Yovan a friend is a person who rings the doorbell four times. "It's no use bothering the Minister," Yovan told me one day when opening the door, "unless a person really wants to see him. And anyone who really wants to see the Minister will ring at least four times!" Yovan also believes that the telephone should not be encouraged by quick response. If it rings when a secretary is off duty, he will wait a while. "If it is something important," he says, "they will ring again." Ranks don't exist for the Bosnian usher. His Minister is the father of the Legation: the Head of Yugoslav territory in Washington. The word Excellency is unknown to him.

The Italian Ambassadors was shooed up the stairs when she arrived fifteen minutes late at a Legation children's party. "You are late," said Yovan severely, "now your little girl has missed half of Mickey Mouse and that is the part they all like best. Listen at the laughing upstairs. Hurry up!"

Yovan likes what he knows of America. He finds the drug store around the corner a very *sympatico* place. But there is one thing to which he cannot get used: the American disrespect for food. When at a Legation party

the butler and the waiters bring into the kitchen the plates from the table, he shakes his head disapprovingly. The half-eaten rolls, bits of cake, and candy left on some of them horrify him. In Serbia he says, when a child drops a piece of bread, which he seldom does, he immediately picks it up and kisses it to show that he means no disrespect to the staff of life.

Fotitch, one of the most hospitable envoys in town, is probably less well paid than any of the others. His poor country, even in its heyday, did not allow its Minister here more than \$12,000 a year. Although he had to count his pennies, he was never known to take advantage of the privileges extended by the United States to the Corps, such as the frank for diplomatic mail. Other diplomatic missions have included cards for debutante teas and wedding invitations in the "official diplomatic correspondence" which alone is supposed to pass unstamped through the Post Office.

Fotitch reached the conclusion that Washington was not the United States, and that neither coast represented the American mind. He planned a trip to the Middle West, arranging to stop at hot shoppes and barbecues for his meals. It was at these popular eating places that he discovered, to his amazement, the complete lack of interest of the average American in Europe's Wars. Having watched for years, from Geneva, the gathering Second World War clouds, he was astonished to discover that the majority of American citizens with whom he talked were interested mainly in local politics and baseball.

It reminded him, he said, of the siege of Constantinople

in 1453: When the Turks were at the gates of Byzantium and about to take the city, Byzantine society was engaged in a momentous discussion. It was so occupied in talking it could take no notice of what was going on outside the walls. Some curious Byzantine ladies, it is true, peeked through the cracks and glimpsed the fierce-looking Turkish besiegers—with mingled emotions. But Byzantine society as a whole had more important things to do. It was debating the great question: “What is the sex of angels?”

Fotitch was not only busy discovering America; he found before him the task of explaining his country to Washington officialdom. By 1939, Yugoslavia had suddenly jumped from the rank of just another Balkan State to one of the important factors in world politics. Fotitch has never believed in the slogan, so dear to professional diplomats: “Say something vague, be polite but *do* nothing, action is so irremediable.” For weal or for woe, the Yugoslav Minister set his course the other way and played an active role in the history of his country. He began to inform American officials of certain factors in the Yugoslav political set-up. The notion had been cherished in some quarters of the State Department that the Regent, Oxford-educated Prince Paul, was a confirmed anglo-ophile who could be checked off as an anti-Nazi knight on the European chessboard. Fotitch did not hesitate to warn the State Department that although Prince Paul was educated in England, he reflected the England of the Cliveden set, and would not be likely to find alluring the “blood and tears” program of Winston Churchill.

Paul was musical, artistic, literary. He was wedded to

his comfort and leisure, and he put the small elegances of existence above the doubtful privilege of fighting for any cause. During the years he had spent in England, he had become thoroughly imbued with the Oxford peace idea. King Alexander had had to force him to wear a uniform when he attended official functions in London during the last war. Fotitch, a veteran of 1914-1918, had few illusions as to the ultimate choice of the Regent if he were pushed too far.

"War means living in a dugout, and eating cold pork sausages. And that kind of life will never appeal to the fastidious Paul." Paul's wife, Princess Olga, added another interrogation point to the large question of the Regent's attitude. She was both ambitious and vain. When she and the Regent paid their visit to Herr Hitler in Berlin in 1939, the Princess borrowed the jewels of her sister, the Duchess of Kent, in order to shine in the Nazi Capital. She was known to dread the day when young King Peter would occupy the throne and she would cease to be the First Lady of Yugoslavia.

In August, 1939, a few of us had gathered in the apartment of the Counsellor of the Yugoslav Legation, Dr. Rybar, to drink *slivovitz* and eat *pita*—a Serbian sausage rolled in delicious pastry. The Counsellor of the ghost Czechoslovak Legation, Dr. Brescka, was present. During the dinner, he engaged in a fiery, though friendly discussion with his host. Said the Czech: "We are *hoping* for a war to break out—the sooner the better, so that Czechoslovakia will be re-born!" The Yugoslav answer was: "No people should wait for anybody else to fight

for it. If the Czechs had really desired their liberty above all, they would have fought regardless of what anybody said." And he added: "Suppose Prague, with all its monuments and churches had been destroyed—what good are they to you now? Prague is just another German City!" The Czech replied that his people had been ready to fight, but that the leaders gave the signal too late, and, he warned: "You will see, the Yugoslavs will find themselves in exactly the same position some day!"

But the members of the Yugoslav Legation never believed, in spite of the doubtful attitude of their Regent, that the Serbs would yield their independence without striking a blow. No subsequent events, not even the fall of France, could shake them in that conviction.

In February, 1941, when the principal Cabinet officers, Cvetkovic and Markovic, went to Berchtesgaden at the bidding of Herr Hitler, Fotitch knew that the zero hour had come. He was determined to throw his weight—for whatever it was worth—into the scales. Through friends of his he contacted President Roosevelt and urged him to make a public statement to the effect that if Yugoslavia had to fight for her independence, she would benefit by the policy of American support to the fighting democracies. A public statement of that sort could not be made by the White House because of the possible reaction in Congress, where the lease-lend bill was being debated. The President feared that his opponents might accuse him of trying to involve the nation in "Balkan squabbles." But Undersecretary of State Welles gave Fotitch the desired assurance, which was immediately cabled to Belgrade. In the meantime, America's Minister to Yugo-



slavia, Arthur Bliss Lane, received instructions from the State Department to give similar assurances to Prince Paul. These messages induced the ruler of Yugoslavia to delay the signature of the agreement with the Reich for forty days. He finally yielded in Vienna in March, 1941. Everybody in Washington except Fotitch believed then that the game was over, that the Germans had obtained another bloodless victory—this time over the fierce, fighting Serbs.

On March 25, when Yugoslavia signed the agreement with the Axis Powers, Mr. Welles received the Minister of Yugoslavia. The Undersecretary tactfully expressed his condolences at the disappearance of the independent Yugoslav State, and his full understanding of the action of Prince Paul in bowing to the Germans. Fotitch, even then, refused to believe that the matter was settled and told Welles that his condolences were premature. The round, good-natured face of the Yugoslav Minister, its blandness usually only belied by the keen look in his heavy-lidded eyes, was very serious that day. "You see," Fotitch—carefully choosing his words—explained to the Undersecretary, "my country has no art, no literature, no monuments. It has contributed principally to world civilization its conception of liberty, its will to resist any power which might try to crush its freedom. You will see that when the time comes to submit to the Reich, the population of Serbia itself will take matters in its own hands and sweep clean everything that means subjugation. The peasants don't mind being crushed by defeat; they know they will regain their freedom once more. They know that resistance is essential if the national

spirit is to keep alive; once the backbone bends voluntarily it seldom straightens up again. My people know that there will be sacrifices, but sacrifices will make them more determined than ever to be free men. You will see that Vienna is not the last word!"

Fotitch was right—the Cvetkovic cabinet was swept out of office when the Serbian people heard that it had decided to bow to the German will. The members of the Yugoslav Legation were torn between concern for their homeland and their families and jubilation over the fact that their countrymen had again chosen to defend their freedom. The Chancery buzzed with activity; an extra telephone girl was taken on to handle the hundreds of congratulatory messages which were pouring in from all over the country. Fotitch was besieged by reporters; broadcasting stations wanted him to go on the air; photographers lined the Legation steps.

While enthusiastic Americans were calling the Legation to express admiration for the brave Yugoslavs, Fotitch was talking on his private wire with the new head of the Belgrade Government, General Simovic. The Nazi blitz had started and Yugoslavia was meeting it alone. A staff conversation between the Yugoslavs and the British took place after invasion had begun; it was the first and last contact between the two armies.

Fotitch trod the path which had been worn by the uneasy feet of the Polish, the Finnish, the Danish, the Norwegian, the Dutch, the Belgian, the French and the Greek envoys. He went to the State Department on the same errand. He was asking for a practical expression of sympathy for the beleaguered Yugoslav democracy.

Mr. Welles received him cordially and said that his country would of course benefit by the provisions of the lease-lend bill. Yugoslavia could have anything she wanted from Red Cross bandages to bombers. There was, of course, the difficult problem of transportation. It would take months before American military supplies could reach Yugoslav or Greek ports. Too well Fotitch knew this. The Greeks had been fighting since October and not a single American plane had reached them by May in spite of the frantic efforts of Minister Diamantopoulos. The Undersecretary pointed out that American factories had stepped up production; matériel would reach New York and other Atlantic ports in the near future—the real issue remained the necessary tonnage to take it across. There were some Yugoslav boats in American ports which might serve, Fotitch told Sumner Welles.

Col. Charles Sweeny, America's foremost soldier of fortune, was in Washington at that moment. He had just come back from England where he had handed over to the R.A.F. its first group of American fighting men—the Eagle Squadron.

Sweeny is always on the side of the under-dog. He saw another chance of hitting the Nazis by helping the Yugoslavs. He suggested to Fotitch that he form an American Eagle Squadron for Yugoslavia. He had the men on hand; he needed only the planes. Sweeny urged Fotitch to ask the American Government to let him have a dozen or so flying fortresses which he would undertake to get across the Atlantic to Yugoslavia or Greece in a few days. He insisted speed was essential. Fotitch agreed—he began to make the rounds of White House and State

Department officials and all approved the plan. So many people approved so completely that Yugoslavia was wiped off the map by the time the bombers were at hand. The Serbs had fought, as on many previous occasions, a losing battle.

The Yugoslav Legation settled into the quiet of a long wait—sustained by one thought: Yugoslavia's costly resistance had deprived Nazi Germany of a so-called alliance which would have put her fighting potential at the disposal of Berlin.

"Yovan," said Pola, the twelve-year-old daughter of the Yugoslav Minister, "we have no country any longer, have we?" "Miss Pola, the country is still there. The men have gone up into the mountains, that's all. They have done that before—they'll come down into the plains by and by, and they won't be ashamed to show their faces, either!"



## X

### CHINESE PUZZLE

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"THE LADIES of the Chinese Legation have been revelling in the balmy air and bright sunshine lately. Madame Tsui has learned to walk splendidly, and so have her lady companions. The ladies are growing fond of soda water and during their afternoon ambles in the neighborhood of Dupont Circle, they slake their thirst in this delicious compound with great pleasure. Madame Tsui's tiny feet have quite a burden to carry, as she has grown very stout since her coming here. The ladies are always accompanied by a maid, an intelligent Chinese woman, who wears an expression of such good nature as to cause all the babies in the park to smile at her. She can talk German and English, and wears shoes big enough for her fat feet, a comfort denied to her superiors in rank and station." This little account of the activities of the wife of the Chinese Minister to Washington appeared in the

Washington Star society column on May 2, 1891. Today the wife of the Chinese military attaché spends her free evenings at the Americanization School perfecting her English, and her afternoons on the tennis courts improving her already fast game of tennis. This Chinese daughter of 1941 is a far cry from stuffed Madame Tsui, whose tiny bound feet carried her painfully towards the coveted American novelty—the ice cream soda.

The new Chinese Embassy is also a far cry from the small, old-fashioned house on an obscure side street which gave discreet shelter to the well-chaperoned Madame Tsui. After the Japanese built themselves a new Embassy on Massachusetts Avenue, Chiang Kai-shek's envoy, Dr. Hu Shih, rented one of the largest estates in Washington, Twin Oaks, second only to War Secretary Stimson's million-dollar Woodley.

In the panelled dining-room of Twin Oaks, Hu Shih gives typical Chinese dinners, but the oriental atmosphere is more conscious than not. Though the ladies of the Chinese Embassy wear the narrow silk sheathes of their own land when there is an entertainment going on, the picturesque native dress is a concession to the American guests who expect Chinese atmosphere in a Chinese home. The traditional attire of old China doesn't cramp the style of young China when she dons it for an evening. I complimented the wife of a Secretary on her slim Chinese gown, made of exquisite lavender brocaded silk with a pale green collar (she looked like a young iris bud about to unfold). I used most carefully selected words and spoke slowly in order to make myself understood by this beautiful oriental. She almost made me drop

my cocktail glass when she answered briskly and with a cheerful grin: "Thanks, you're no slouch yourself!"

Dr. Hu Shih places chop sticks suggestively alongside the silverware for his dinner guests. When there is a pause in the conversation, the attentive attachés launch into a chop stick instruction course, in perfect American slang, while they laugh gently at the clumsiness of Western fingers.

Hu Shih, poet, philosopher, and former college professor, understands perfectly the value of the colorful civilization he represents. Though he frequently lunches on a lamb chop and ice cream, he invariably gives his American guests Chinese dishes: bird's nest soup, shark fins, lacquered duck, bamboo sprouts with almonds, and fifty-year-old eggs. Few of the amateurs of exotic foods who conscientiously sample the last-named delicacy know that they are eating strictly fresh hard-boiled eggs which have been colored a deep mahogany. The genuine articles are now difficult to obtain. Chinese importers are unable to get certain foods from war-torn China and the infrequent diplomatic valise from Chungking is full of more important matter than eggs—no matter how venerable.

Hu Shih entertains frequently, but his parties are small and unpublicized. He spends little time on the members of the Diplomatic Corps. The Chinese Ambassador understood what his British and French colleagues failed to see—that a foreign diplomat is in Washington primarily to see Americans. Cabinet officers, Senators, high churchmen, both Catholic and Protestant, government officials, economists and intellectuals are asked to the Embassy,

where Hu Shih entertains them in Chinese style because he thinks Washington likes dinner-table excursions into the Far East.

Hu Shih is not a whirlwind diplomat. China's ability to turn the Japanese blitzkrieg into a long war has given her Ambassador a chance to catch his breath and to use the slow and patient method. Unlike his colleagues of the defeated European democracies, he has not wept on the shoulders of State Department officials when the news from home was bad. He takes his country's defeats calmly and relies on gentle parables rather than on impassioned oratory to put his ideas across.

Tirelessly, and with diverting figures of speech, he exposes China's problems and explains that while his country thinks in terms of thousands of years, the present must not be ignored. He does not fail to point out that face-saving, like opium smoking, is an old oriental habit which doesn't get you anywhere. In discussing the British and American technique of yielding to Japanese threats and then trying to save face with diplomatic formulae, he tells the story of the young Chinese who elegantly explains his father's dishonorable death by the hangman's noose: "My honorable father was standing on a platform when a hole opened beneath his feet and in falling he became entangled in a rope which strangled him to death!"

Though Hu Shih is a philosopher sustained by the thought that China, in her long history, has seen worse days, he is more concerned than he appears to be over the immediate fate of his homeland and the difficulties he is meeting in the execution of his mission. His stay in



Washington has impaired his health—although he never admits it.

Hu Shih's figurative talks and polite suggestions have been more successful than the desperate cries for help of the Finns and the French. Hu Shih had the advantage of finding a kindred soul in the exceptionally able Chief of the Far Eastern Division of the State Department—Dr. Stanley Hornbeck. Dr. Hornbeck, who taught for three years in a college in China, has the feel of Far Eastern problems as well as a fund of information. The Chinese Envoy was assured of an intelligent reception when he called at the Department to explain the latest developments.

Hu Shih was not his Government's sole emissary in furthering China's cause in official Washington. His parties have served to introduce scores of unofficial envoys from Chiang Kai-shek to America's policy framers. The thirty-eight-year-old Bishop Yu Pin, who established a record for rapid advancement in the Catholic hierarchy, makes Washington his temporary headquarters. When the famous aviatrix, Hilda Yen, and her flying girl companions toured the United States in an airplane, stopping off in certain cities to lecture on the discomfort of being invaded, they made regular reports on their progress to the Bishop. When the three tall, beautiful Chinese girls walked into a reception organized for them at the Mayflower Hotel straight from their own airplane, they made the front page for themselves and China in all the Washington papers. Hu Shih was pleased. He was more interested in Congress than in any other branch of the Government and he knew what some diplomats and

many American officials did not quite realize: that a front page story in a Washington paper can mean a good deal on Capitol Hill. Members of Congress read, of course, their hometown and State newspapers in order to keep in touch with local politics. They like to have their speeches and pictures printed back home so that their words and faces remain before their constituents. But for the day-to-day information which they must have in order to understand the increasing amount of legislation connected with affairs in far-off countries, they cull the Washington press.

The newsmen of Washington see both Americans and foreigners; gathering information is their job, and a great many of the gentlemen on the "Hill" feel that the "boys" have a more complete and up-to-date view of world affairs than the average Congressman. The legislators sometimes provide the newspapermen with inside information about what is being planned in Congress, indicate how they will vote on one of Mr. Roosevelt's "must" bills, hint at the words high government officials have pronounced in executive sessions. On the other hand, newsmen are frequently given previews of coming events, both national and international, by government officials who are not always so open-handed with individual Congressmen. So the Hill reads not only the news items on the front pages of the local papers, but what every columnist has to say. Washington newspapers have more home-grown columnists than any others in the United States. It is not an infrequent occurrence to hear an important Senator or Representative expound an opinion on international affairs which has been developed one

or two days earlier by a special writer in one of the Washington dailies.

The publicity given to China's unofficial emissaries in the Washington press has been a substantial help. As long as spectacular battles were being fought between the Chinese and Japanese armies it was easy to keep China's cause before the public. But when the roar of guns was dimmed, Americans were comfortably inclined to forget suffering China. At such times the arrival of one of Chiang Kai-shek's agents served as a spur to lagging memory.

Bishop Yu Pin came to Washington soon after the sack of Nanking, where he had been an eye witness to scenes of indescribable horror. He had stayed in that desolated city during the occupation by the unleashed Japanese forces and had watched the final establishment of an orderly oppression.

Yu Pin had his share of publicity, with the result that he was sought after by members of Congress for inside information on China. The Chinese Bishop adds to the gentleness of his religion the philosophy of his race. His conversation is an artless blend of optimism about his country's future and a mild admonition to Americans to stop supplying the Japanese with the sinews of war. I listened to the Bishop explaining to the late Senator Pittman at a dinner party just why he is hopeful of China's ultimate victory. His chief reason for optimism was extremely unexpected: "China will win the war because she is completely unorganized." The Bishop went on to say that there are two types of countries which can resist aggression today—the completely organized and the com-

pletely unorganized. It is the in-between countries—organized enough to have nerve-centers, not organized enough to protect them—which are in danger. “The Japanese took our railroads—so what? We didn’t use them anyway. They occupy our cities, so what? They are afraid to go outside them at night. There are one million Japanese in China—divided into small islands—and we are the sea of four hundred millions. We will end by drowning them. But we *would* appreciate it if kind America would stop selling war supplies to Japan!”

The phrase about “kind America and war supplies to Japan” crops up in one form or another in any conversation with Chiang’s diplomats. Mrs. Wellington Koo, the wife of the Chinese Ambassador to London and one of China’s most beautiful and gifted women, lingered in the Capital for weeks trying to deliver that message.

Washington hostesses are forever looking for a new dish or for an outstanding guest of honor for their parties. The internationally known Mrs. Koo was a prize at any dinner table. In Paris, while her husband was Ambassador, Mrs. Wellington Koo out-Parisianed the most chic Parisienne by going to the best couturiers who created gowns specially for her. But in Washington, where she was extensively entertained, she invariably appeared in Chinese clothes. Her gowns were made of priceless materials woven in the East, and she wore around her neck a huge gold collar. Her wrists were burdened with heavy Oriental jewelry, which would have looked excessive on anybody else.

When Mrs. Koo entered a room the other women present wilted visibly. Her sleek, ivory beauty made the

other feminine guests look red-faced, overblown and blowzy. But Mrs. Koo was not just a lovely ornament—she was a silk-encased dynamo. China's need was her own and she gathered all that China had given her in order to break through the empty cordiality, the indifferent kindness which greeted her urgent pleas. The wife of a Congressman was making polite after-dinner conversation—why had Madame Koo placed her sons, aged sixteen and fifteen, at Harvard and Columbia respectively, instead of leaving them at school in China? Madame Koo answered in her silky, courteous voice, "The bombs from Japanese planes, propelled by American gasoline, made so much noise that they kept my poor boys from concentrating properly; so I brought them to Americal"

A characteristic of Chinese diplomats is exquisite courtesy: smoothly incisive on the part of Madame Koo—she was a woman—philosophical on the part of Hu Shih. Hu Shih startled diplomatic Washington by engaging in polite conversation with Japan's Ambassador Horinouchi at the last diplomatic reception at the White House. The friendly greeting between the envoys of the two Asiatic countries which had been at war for eight years was in marked contrast to the tense atmosphere between the European diplomats. It was so tense that the President decided to cancel henceforth his yearly handshake with the six hundred and fifty members of the Corps.

It was December, 1939. England and France had declared war on Germany; Poland was already crushed. In

October a German submarine had entered Scapa Flow and sunk the Royal Oak. The French army was sitting behind the Maginot Line, occupied with the problem of entertainment for the bored officers and men. Against this disturbing background we got into our party best and prepared for the social event of the season. When we drew up to the diplomatic entrance of the White House we discovered that, as usual, the Germans had gotten there first. They were stationed just inside the entrance dressed in the gala new grey costume of the Foreign Office. The First Secretary, Herbert Scholz, was an exception: he wore his black and silver SS. uniform. The English and French staffs were forced to file past their German colleagues in order to reach the cloak room. For once the imperturbable British diplomats, led by Lord Lothian, looked uncomfortable; they had been struck in the heart of their pride, the Royal Navy, and they did not enjoy the little promenade past their triumphant colleagues. A few months later, when the German battleship, the Graf Spee, was disabled by British cruisers in an epic fight, and then scuttled by its own crew, one of the attachés who had suffered the discomfort of filing past Herr Thomsen and his crowd, said to me: "I would have been still happier if this had happened *before* the diplomatic reception of last December."

We of the French Embassy staff did not feel much brighter. We shared the British loss, and in addition had our own misgivings about French military inaction. The representatives of crushed Poland were trying to look cheerful as they entered the White House. . . .

We went up the broad steps into the East Room and

lost ourselves in the mass of neutral diplomats. The tension relaxed somewhat as each mission fell into its appointed place and waited for the signal to start filing past the President and Mrs. Roosevelt. Smiling "Pa" Watson presented each diplomat. Once the handshaking ceremony was over and they had begun to re-group in the dining-room, the final abutting place for the single file line, uneasy cross currents could be felt once more behind the artificial smiles of the foreign representatives. Each staff, as it entered the room in a body, looked warily around before joining any other group. Dutch diplomats were sliding gracefully between the horns of their neutrality, shuttling back and forth between the Nazi and the Allied staffs.

At one end of the room, standing by himself, was the Chinese Ambassador, Hu Shih. His usually bland face betrayed an amused expression as he watched the puppet show. The diplomats of Europe, their miniature swords hanging by their sides, were engaging in drawing room battles with their eyes—battles in which their wives were playing an active role. I saw the American wife of a German attaché toss her head disdainfully as the British ladies walked by. The lonely Soviet Ambassador, Constantine Oumansky, was looking daggers at the Ministers of the Nordic States, who were congratulating Hjalmar Procope upon the latest victories of the Finnish Armies.

Just at that moment, Dr. Horinouchi, the Ambassador from Japan, passed Dr. Hu Shih. The two envoys grasped each other by the hand and engaged in cordial conversation. Later in the evening, when the Chinese Ambassador came to my corner, I congratulated him upon

his broad-mindedness. "Oh," he said, with a smile, "you mean my talk with Dr. Horinouchi! You know that my Japanese colleague is a member of the Oxford Group, and a Christian pacifist. I could not let him think a mere heathen would be less high-minded than he is!"

In the vast park of Twin Oaks Hu Shih takes long walks and speaks gently to the marauding squirrels and to the children who steal over the iron fence. Those who know of his solitary promenades believe that the poet-philosopher is meditating upon Confucius, or upon comparative religions. But what is really occupying his mind, he confessed to me one day, is where China is going to get the assistance to continue her ten-year-old fight. Since 1931, when the Japanese invaded Manchuria, the sprawling Chinese Republic has been looking to the United States, first for moral, then for physical, support. The Government of Chiang Kai-shek knows that it is to the advantage of America to see that China keeps her independence.

One of Hu Shih's tasks has been to find out just how far the United States is willing to go in securing that advantage. Hu Shih has found all kinds of dragons in his diplomatic path in Washington. One of the worst was *cha-pu-tu*, which, like the Russian "nichevo" and the Spanish "manana" may mean a lot of things, such as: "It does not matter—never mind—that's good enough—maybe tomorrow." *Cha-pu-tu* is well known in China, but Hu Shih has found its counterpart in official Washington. The American policy of handing China an anti-aircraft gun with one hand, and pouring high octane gas



into Japan's bombers with the other, has been a never ending source of grief and puzzlement for the Chinese Ambassador.

Until August, 1941, all of Hu Shih's persuasiveness had not been able to induce the State Department to run the risk of Japanese ire by completely cutting off the basic war supplies: scrap steel, scrap iron, oil, and high octane gas which she can purchase only in the United States. Hu Shih succeeded better in his policy of obtaining money for Chiang Kai-shek's hard-pressed forces.

A tall, heavy-set gentleman from Texas came to the Chinese Ambassador's help in slaying the dragon of administrative red tape. Jesse Jones loosened the purse strings of the R.F.C. beyond the expectations of Dr. Hu Shih. The Texan's special technique of keeping out of "Hill" trouble has been of great practical help to China. When members of Congress pressed the head of the principal Federal feed bag to give an exact account of the whys and wherefores of the advances of his agency to the Chinese Government, Jesse Jones proved to be a master of the Oriental technique of graceful evasion. When the head of R.F.C. was asked: "How about these loans to China?" he countered: "How about them?" When he was told indignantly that the Chinese would be defeated and that the United States would lose its money, he answered: "The Chinese are very fine people!" And when the late Senator Borah lambasted him vigorously for having made the statement that he could lend China fifty million dollars without congressional authorization, Jesse answered disarmingly: "Dear me, and Mrs. Borah is such a nice person!"

Since the battle of the Atlantic began, America has been able to offer the fighting Chinese love and sympathy, but little else besides. Some token war material and some lease-lend money will continue to find their way to China, but that is all.

Hu Shih likes to spend long evenings, in the winter months, solving Chinese puzzles. But the one called American Foreign Policy has him stumped. He is pondering over the proposition that the shortest line between two points is a curve. China need not worry, the Ambassador is told by the gentlemen of the State Department, America in helping Britain helps defeat Germany; Germany's defeat is Japan's defeat, and when Japan is defeated China becomes victorious. Nothing could be simpler, but Hu Shih looks pensive as he walks in his park on these summer evenings. . . .



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